

THE LAST WEEK OF OUR LORD'S MINISTRY WITH TEXTS AND ARTICLES FOR EACH DAY'S READING

7 days before Passover. Traveling toward Jerusalem.

Matt. 20:17-28; Luke 18:35-43; 19:1-10; R. 3362 (Z '04-138); R. 3847 (Z '06-278).

6 days before Passover. Jesus came to Bethany and in the evening Mary anointed our Lord. John 12:1-8; Mark 14:3-9; Matt. Matthew 26:6-12. R. 2447 (Z '99-76); R. 3534 (Z '05-103).

5 days before Passover. They strewed palm branches; He rode into Jerusalem. Matt. 21:1-16; 23:37-39; Psa. 8:2; Luke 19:40. R. 3537 (Z '05-108); R. 2745 (Z'00-380); R. 3850 (Z '06-281).

4 days before Passover. Cursing of fig tree; cleansing of Temple; He taught the people there. Matt. 21:17-32; Mark 11:12-19; John 2:13-22. R. 5503 (Z '14-219); R. 5920 (Z '16-204); R. 4122 (Z '08-25).

3 days before Passover. Teaching in Temple; challenged with questions; tried to catch Him in His words. Many parables given on this day. Matt. 22:15-46; 23:14-39; 25:1-13. R. 3852, (Z '06-284); R. 1982 (Z '96-115); R. 2746, c. 2, p. 2-3 (Many of His parables given) = (Z '00-382, c. 1, p. 1).

2 days before Passover. There is no record of the events of this day; it was probably spent in retirement at Bethany. R. 3542, c. 1, p. 7 (Z '05-118); R. 3000 (Z '02-131) = EXCELLENT for season.

1 day before Passover. The disciples made ready for the Passover which was to be after 6:00 that evening. Matt. 26:17-20; Luke 22:7-71; John 13:5, 14-15. R. 3542 (Z'05-118); R. 3551 (Z '05-136); R. 4167 (Z '08-139); R. 3885 (Z '06-356); R. 2467 (Z '99-115); R. 2469 (Z '99-119); R. 2773 (Z '01-77); R. 1801 (Z '95-95); R. 5331 (Z '13-311); R. 3879 (Z '06-333); R. 3363 (Z '04-140).

The day of the crucifixion. Bro. Russell suggests that we keep very close to our Lord during this day — remembering what He endured and entering into it as fully as possible. Matt. 27:1-51. R. 3895 (Z '06-363); R. 3369 (Z '04*155); R. 3366 (Z '04-149); R. 2315 (Z '98-171); R. 2473 (Z '99-12); R. 1815 (Z '95-122); R. 3560 (Z '05-152); R. 1366-1368: “An Ancient and Interesting Document.” (Z '99-39, 40, 51).

The Resurrection. Matt. 28:1-10. R. 3903 (Z '06-380); R. 2476 (Z '99-132); R. 2800 (Z '01-134); R. 1823 (Z '95-135); R. 5415 (Z '14-74).

Chapter 1: Seven Days before the Crucifixion:

Matthew 20: 17-28

20:17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

20:18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

20:19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify [him]: and the third day he shall rise again.

20:20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping [him], and desiring a certain thing of him.

20:21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

20:22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

20:23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but [it shall be given to them] for whom it is prepared of my Father.

20:24 And when the ten heard [it], they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

20:25 But Jesus called them [unto him], and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

20:26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

20:27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

20:28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Luke 18:35-43

18:35 And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:

18:36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

18:37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

18:38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, [thou] son of David, have mercy on me.

18:39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, [Thou] son of David, have mercy on me.

18:40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

18:41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

18:42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

18:43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw [it], gave praise unto God.

Luke 19: 1-10

19:1 And [Jesus] entered and passed through Jericho.

19:2 And, behold, [there was] a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

19:3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

19:4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that [way].

19:5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

19:6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

19:7 And when they saw [it], they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

19:8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore [him] fourfold.

19:9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

ONLY THE HUMBLE SHALL BE EXALTED.

--MARK 10:35-45.--MAY 22.--

Golden Text: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

SEVERAL weeks intervened between the incidents of the last lesson and the present one. In that time the Lord had crossed over Jordan in answer to the request of Mary and Martha that he should come and heal their brother Lazarus, who was sick. Jesus arrived intentionally too late for this, but awakened Lazarus from sleep, and thereby aroused a great storm of opposition, especially amongst the scribes and Pharisees, who sought to put him to death. Knowing that his time was not yet come, he retired into a mountain of northern Judea, but at the time of this lesson he with his twelve apostles was *en route* for Jerusalem. He had just explained to them more particularly the ignominy, shame and death which he would experience, and repeated his assurance of his resurrection. The rich young ruler had just visited him, and gone away sorrowful upon learning the terms of discipleship. Jesus had just said, How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom; the apostles had inquired what they should have since they had left all, and Jesus assured them that they should have a hundred fold more in this present time, with persecution, and in the world to come everlasting life.

The context says that Jesus was walking in advance of the twelve, who were discussing matters amongst themselves, overawed by the stupendous things which the Lord had declared to be imminent. The courage of our Lord in the narrow way fills us with admiration. What a strong character was his! He had no thought of turning back; he was intent upon accomplishing his Father's will--upon sacrificing himself in the interest of others. A noble pattern the apostles saw before them--greatness in humility, victory through service.

A GOODLY HERITAGE DESIRED.

It was at this time that James and John approached the Lord in a private manner. Matthew tells us that their mother Salome was with them and really made the request for them in their names. Salome is supposed to have been the sister of Mary, the aunt of Jesus, in which event James and John were his full cousins. Realizing that matters were drawing to a crisis they sought of the Lord an assurance that they two might be very close to him

in the Kingdom, one on his right hand and one on his left, the two positions of chiefest favor.

Our Lord did not reprove them, for doubtless he read in their hearts a great love and loyalty toward himself; and the desire for the positions indicated not merely the desire for the honors and authority implied, but specially because this would bring them closer to himself. Had the Lord seen in their hearts an evil form of ambition, undoubtedly he would have reproved it on the spot. His answer, however, was so framed as to impress these brothers and all of his followers since with what is implied in joint-heirship with the Lord in the Kingdom. Very forceful is the expression, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

The cup signifies experiences--as, for instance, when our Lord said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (*John 18:11*.) Our Lord wished his disciples to see clearly that the Father had poured for him a special cup of experiences, and had required of him special baptism into death, as conditions precedent to his glory and Kingdom; and that whoever would become his associates in the Kingdom must become also his associates in the sufferings of this present time--in the ignominy and whatever experiences the Father might see best to permit as tests of faith and devotion and character. Our Lord did not refer to the Memorial Supper cup, but to the experiences which it symbolized, even as he did not refer to water baptism, but to the baptism into death which is symbolized by the water immersion.

How heart-searching was this question! It meant, Are ye willing? because it would be impossible for the disciples to have known their own ability except in the sense of having confidence in God that he would give the ability to those who had their wills thoroughly subjected to his. This is illustrated in the symbolical baptism, in which one no more buries himself than he raises himself. We merely surrender our wills, our all, to the Lord, and he by his Word and grace works in us to will and ultimately to do his good pleasure--expecting from us only the possibilities, and assisting us to these with grace sufficient for us, for every time of need.

"MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU."

That these two noble apostles were not inspired by selfish ambitions in this request is evidenced by their prompt reply to the Lord's searching question and later on evidenced by their faithfulness even unto death. They said, "We are able"--that is, "We are willing. God helping us, we will sacrifice everything to follow in your footsteps; we will count nothing dear unto us; we will lay aside every weight and every sinful besetment; we will run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." This we may assume to be a larger statement of their devotion.

Our Lord's love and sympathy went out to them afresh as he answered them, guaranteeing that with such willingness of heart they should indeed have the experiences necessary to fit them for a place in the Kingdom. What a comfort this is to even the weakest of the Lord's followers who are sincere.

The Lord looketh at the heart, and if he sees there full devotion to himself, he is pleased to grant to such his blessing, his aid, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee--my strength is made perfect in weakness." We, too, are desirous of sharing the Kingdom with our Lord, yet not from love of exaltation above others, but from a desire to have this evidence that we please our Father and our Lord Jesus-- to have this closeness of relationship to him, and to have the privilege of participation with our dear Redeemer in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. It is well that we should have the Lord's answer clearly before our minds, and know that unless we partake of his cup and are immersed into his death, we can have no share in his Kingdom of glory. Let us then count all things else as loss and as dross to obtain this necessary experience. As it comes to us let us not be fearful, nor think strange of the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. On the contrary, even hereunto were we called, that we might now suffer with the Lord and by and by be glorified together with him.

As for the particular place to be occupied in the Kingdom by the sons of Zebedee or by us, our Lord pointed out that the assigning of such positions was in the Father's hands--the choicest positions shall be given to those for whom they have been prepared by the Father. Not that we are to understand that the Father prepared the places in advance by any arbitrary divisions, but rather that the Father's pre-arranged plan is that each of the followers of Jesus shall have positions of honor in the Kingdom proportionate to the zeal of their faithfulness in the present time--for none shall have any part in the Kingdom who do not now prove faithful.

THE MEEKEST AND MOST ZEALOUS.

It is not for us to decide the zeal and faithfulness of the apostles--to say which two would better fill these positions of chiefest honor. The Father will make no mistake. It will not surprise us, however, should we find the Apostle Paul in one of these two positions. His faithful, loving zeal and loyalty seem to shine out conspicuously even amongst those who were also faithful and loyal. It is not for us to have any ambitious feelings respecting this matter, except that we desire always to serve the Lord and be pleasing to him, and eventually to be as close to him as possible. When we remember that the closer we come to him in the present trials and experiences and suffering with faithfulness the closer we will be to him in the future, it explains to us the meaning of the Apostle's words when speaking of his severe trials: he called them light afflictions but for a moment, working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.--*2 Cor. 4:17*.

We recall that there had been, a little while before, some rivalry amongst the apostles as to which should be greatest in the Kingdom. At that time Jesus took a little child as an exemplification of candor and guilelessness, and assured them that unless they became as little children--simple-hearted, honest, candid, they could in no wise have any part in his Kingdom. Now, when the ten other disciples learned the special mission of Salome and the request made by and for James and John, they were indignant at them. Possibly some of them, Judas included, were very anxious for the authority and power and dignity of the throne, but without the very special love and longing to be near the Master himself which seem to have influenced James and John in their request. But Jesus set matters straight with them all, and turned their displeasure into an opportunity for another good lesson, by the assurance that the chief positions in the Kingdom would be given along the lines of meritorious service, and that thus each one of them would have his opportunity to strive for the chief position by striving to render service to the others.

Amongst the Gentiles the rulers are lords, who do no serving but are served, but among the followers of Jesus the rule is to be reversed; he who would serve most was to be esteemed most highly. What a beauty there is in the divine order of things! how thoroughly all who are right minded can sympathize with the principles here laid down! How reasonable they are and how contrary to the spirit of the world. Truly, the Lord's followers will in this sense of the word be a peculiar people in their zeal for good works--for serving one another and for doing good unto all men as they have opportunity. The Apostle Peter emphasizes this point (*1 Pet. 5:6*),

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased."--*Luke 14:11*.

OUR LORD SERVANT OF ALL.

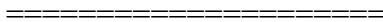
The Lord did not have one standard for his followers and another standard for himself. Consequently, when they heard him say, Whosoever of you will be chief shall be servant of all, they could promptly recognize that this was the course that he had pursued--that he had been servant to them all; and it was on account of the services that he was continually rendering them that they delighted to serve him, to acknowledge him their Master and to walk in his steps. Indeed they had seen only a small fragment of the Lord's sacrificing and of its far-reaching influence as a service to others. We can see this as we recognize the fact that our Lord was about to die, not merely for his disciples, not merely for the Jews, but to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that the whole world eventually might have a blessing--a blessed opportunity for coming to life eternal through the merit of his service. Our Lord called this to their attention, saying, "For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto [served] but to minister [serve], and to give his life a ransom for many." This is one of the very explicit statements of Scripture respecting the object of our Lord's death--that it was not for his own sins that he died, that on the contrary it was for ours, and that in thus dying he gave himself a ransom price--a corresponding price for the sins of the whole world.

No other lesson requires to be so carefully learned by the Lord's people as this lesson of humility. It has to do with the very humblest of the flock, as well as with those who are teachers and elders and pilgrims, etc.; but the degree of force that seems to come with the besetment or temptation seems to multiply in proportion to the position and attainments of the individual. Pride and ambition may be in those who have no official position in the Church, often asserted in fault-finding and criticism which, to the hearers, is intended to imply superior

wisdom or ability on the part of the critic--that his wisdom and ability only wait for opportunity to manifest his greatness above his fellows. We are not objecting to a kindly brotherly word of criticism given privately and with a view to helpfulness, but merely to the kind which vaunteth itself and seeks to do injury to the reputation of another occupying a preferred position.

"BE NOT MANY OF YOU TEACHERS."

As the Apostle intimates, however, this besetment bears chiefly upon those who have some talent, some ability, and whom their fellows have to some extent honored as teachers. Little men, like little ships with broad sails, are in great danger of being capsized if too strong a wind of popularity play upon them. Not only so, but we believe that even the most humble, the most faithful, the most zealous to be servants of the cause, have continual need to be on their guard lest their good intentions should be used of the Adversary as a trap for their ensnarement. Let us remember the Apostle's words, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man [who is a teacher] shall receive greater condemnation"--he is exposed to greater trials and temptations as a result. This must not hinder any who have talents from using them, but it should make each one very careful that he does not think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think soberly. If the judgment of the majority of the congregation does not recognize his adaptation to the service of a teacher, he should humbly accept its conclusion as correct, no matter how highly he had thought of himself previously. And even if the majority should conclude that he is worthy of a position as a teacher in Zion, he should tread very softly before the Lord, very humbly, realizing that those who in any degree attempt to impart instruction in spiritual things to others are to that extent acting as representatives and mouthpieces of the Lord himself, the Head of the body; and all should keep in mind the Lord's words in this Golden Text and his own exemplification of the matter--that he who serves most and not he who lords it most should have the chief respect of the Lord's people.



"THY FAITH HATH SAVED THEE"

--LUKE 18:35-19:10.--SEPTEMBER 2.--

Golden Text:--"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

OUR GOLDEN TEXT briefly and concisely sets forth our Lord's mission. To those who learn to read it aright it tells of a world of mankind, the entire race of Adam, lost in sin and its penalty, death--lost without hope of ability to recover itself, without hope that any member of the race could ever redeem it or give to God a ransom for his brother. (*Psa. 49:7.*) This text sets forth the remedy, the only remedy provided by the Son of man. "He who was rich for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich"--he left the heavenly condition and humbled himself to human nature that "he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (*2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 2:9.*) To appreciate the meaning of the word "lost" in this connection helps us to appreciate the meaning of the word "saved." As man was lost in sin, lost in death, so he is to be recovered from sin, recovered from death.

Salvation then, in God's arrangement, means recovery from sin and its penalty death, and from all its concomitants of sorrow and pain, imperfection and dying. How reasonable, how sensible, is this Scriptural proposition! How well it is backed up by the Apostle's statement that the salvation to be brought to mankind at the second coming of Jesus will be a recovery or restitution of all that was lost, during the "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (*Acts 3:19-21.*) While this salvation belongs specifically to the coming age, the Millennium, nevertheless to some the Lord is granting a beginning of salvation in the present time--to those whose eyes and ears of understanding and hearts of appreciation are open to the messages of divine grace, whispered at the present time under adverse conditions, but by and by to be so sounded abroad that every ear shall hear.

BLIND BARTIMEUS' FAITH

Jesus was en route for Jerusalem by way of Jericho. The Feast of Passover was approaching, and the roads leading to Jerusalem had many travellers, who usually went in companies or in groups. With our Lord and his apostles was a considerable number of friends, together with numerous Pharisees headed toward Jericho. By the wayside sat a blind man, Bartimeus, hoping to excite the sympathy of the

passers-by, for he was a beggar. In those days there was no special provision for the blind, and there were many of them in those parts.

Although numerous groups had passed, something especially attracted the attention of Bartimeus to this group as an extraordinary one, and he inquired who or what so large a company might represent. He was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, and that the commotion, the multitude, represented those who were in his company. Many evidently preceded Jesus, so that the blind man began to cry for mercy and help before the Lord got to him. Those in the forefront rebuked him and told him to stop his shouting, intimating that the great Teacher should not be interrupted by a wayside beggar. But the man had evidently heard of Jesus before--possibly had heard of other blind men healed by him. In any event he was seized with a conviction that this prophet of Nazareth was able to grant him relief, that he was probably the true Messiah, the Son of God. Hence he shouted the more vociferously, "Thou Son of David [Messiah], have mercy on me!"

The procession stopped, and Jesus commanded that the man be brought to him. He did not shout for him to come, but commanded, "Let him be brought." *Mark (10:46)* tells us that those who brought the blind man said to him, "Be of good cheer, rise; he calleth thee," and also tells us that he immediately cast away his cloak or mantle in his haste to respond. When led to Jesus the latter asked him, "What wilt thou that I should do for thee?" He responded, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." The Lord answered, "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee."

There were many blind men throughout Palestine, yet only comparatively few received such a blessing. Why? Undoubtedly because few had the requisite faith. Note in the case of Bartimeus, the evidency which belongs to true faith; and note also the evidency that he was of sincere heart, as demonstrated by the fact that after he had received his sight he followed the Lord, glorifying God. He might on the contrary have said to himself, "Yes, I have heard a good deal about modern salves and about a prophet who could speak the word and restore the sight, but in my opinion all these are

deceptions. In any case they are not for me. I suppose if I were rich and influential this Prophet of Nazareth would be pleased to heal me if he thought I would give him a good fee, or if some of my relatives were able to pay him well. No, I have given up all hope. Israel has been looking for a long time for the Messiah, anyway. It is not at all probable that he will come in my day, that he will pass by just where I am sitting, and that it would be any use for me to cry out for mercy to him." Had the blind man thus reasoned, without faith, undoubtedly the procession would have passed him by and he would have remained blind.

EYES OF UNDERSTANDING BLINDED

That physical blindness is a terrible affliction none will question. But how much more serious is the mental and spiritual blindness which prevails. The Scriptures tell us that the whole world, except the few who are true believers in the Lord Jesus, are all blind--"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." (*2 Cor. 4:4*.) The blinded ones are cut off by false doctrines from ability to see the grandeur of the divine character and plan for human salvation. There are various degrees of this mental and spiritual blindness: some can see nothing, others can see a little, vaguely, dimly. Some can look at the sun, moon and stars and see nothing in them beyond what they call nature--a federation of matter without intelligent direction. The Prophet has declared that "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard," by some; but, alas, how many there are who hear not, see not, these things, who realize not the divine supervision of all of life's affairs.

Lacking of faith in a gracious, just and loving God of wisdom and power, these blind and deaf ones are unprepared for the messages of his love and grace as they are given to us in his Word. To some of them it seems foolishness to think of a personal Creator at all: to others it seems foolish to think that one so great as to be able to create the worlds would pay particular attention to the interests of the individual members of our race. They are blind and cannot see afar off--they can merely see the affairs of the present life, with its eating and drinking, planting and building, laughing and crying, living and dying. They know not if there is anything else or what it is. Others with a little opening of the eyes of understanding can realize that there is a personal God and that he takes a personal interest; and these in turn are blinded by the Adversary's misrepresentations of the divine Word, which give false impressions respecting the divine character and

plan. These are blinded by the traditions of the elders from the "dark ages" respecting the divine purpose--that it is merely to elect a few and to turn the great majority into a place of eternal torment. Alas for such blindness! How we long for the time promised by the Lord through the Prophet, when all shall know him, from the least to the greatest--when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped.

BARTIMEUS' EXPERIENCES ILLUSTRATIVE

The incident before us in this lesson serves well to illustrate how some who at the present time belong to the blind class are brought to the Lord and graciously receive the opening of the eyes of their understanding. In the Lord's providence they hear that Jesus of Nazareth passes by; in the Lord's providence they have heard something respecting the great Teacher and the eternal life and the opening of blind eyes which he effects. They seize the opportunity, they lay hold upon the Lord by faith, they cry to him, --"Have mercy upon me, thou Son of David." The thought is suggested to them that there are many more worthy than themselves to have the Master's attention, that they are too insignificant, too sinful for him to recognize. But faith holds on. They have heard of his mercy toward others and they cry unto him so much the more, until finally he bids them come, and "whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out."--*John 6:37*.

All who now come unto the Lord by faith encounter some experiences of opposition which correspond in considerable degree to those of Bartimeus. Generally they are without encouragement until they realize their need and cry to the Lord. Even these now find assistance from those who delight to assist them, saying, "Be of good cheer, rise; he calleth thee."

Then comes the Master's question, "What wilt thou?" And well it is for those who, like Bartimeus, can say, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Such do receive enlightenment from the Lord, an enlightenment by which they can see him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and through whom they may come to a knowledge of the Father, whom to know is life eternal.--*John 17:3*.

But, alas, many today when asked this question, "What wilt thou?" request riches or honors of men or temporal blessings of some sort, appreciating not their great need of spiritual necessities. Even those of us who have enjoyed considerable blessing in the way of the opening of our eyes to see the divine character and plan need to remember how the Apostle prayed for the Church, "that the eyes of your

understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power."--*Eph. 1:18,19.*

WHEN THE PEOPLE SAW IT

When the multitude saw that the blind man had received his sight and had become a follower of Jesus and was giving glory to God they also joined in praise--all who beheld. So it is today with us. As one after another come to a knowledge of the divine character and plan, all who are in accord with the Lord are not only ready to assist them to the Lord, but ready also to join in praise on their behalf, rejoicing in their blessing. The great mass of the world, however, who see not, who appreciate not, this miracle of change from blindness to spiritual sight and understanding, cannot now join in praise and thanks to God. We are glad, however, that the time is coming when the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, when every creature in heaven and in earth shall be heard saying "Praise and honor and dominion and glory and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb."--*Isa. 11:9; Phil. 2:11; Rev. 5:13.*

Our lesson gives a second illustration of how the Son of man is able to save all that come unto him through faith. The Lord and his company had passed through Jericho on toward Jerusalem. The whole city evidently was stirred with the knowledge that the great Prophet of Nazareth was en route for Jerusalem. Zaccheus was apparently one of its prominent and wealthy citizens, a publican. The word "publican" today is in some places the name applied to bar-keepers, liquor-dealers, but in our Lord's time it indicated a collector of taxes for the Roman government. The Israelites demurred against being taxed by the Romans, claiming that they were the Kingdom of God, and that the Roman nation and all nations should rather pay taxes to them. The prejudice on the subject was so strong that the more reputable class of Jews would not accept the office. Besides this, the methods of collecting the taxes were frequently along the lines of extortion, as indeed is said to be still the method of collecting taxes in oriental lands.

Consequently to be a publican came to signify an irreligious, unpatriotic, unscrupulous character. The Pharisees disesteemed these as sinners, as no longer Jews nor heirs of the Covenant promises. The publicans recognized themselves as of the sinner caste, and sometimes in the Temple, if they went

there to pray, heard the more religious give thanks to God that they were not publicans--that they had not lost all their manhood and religion and patriotism.

Zaccheus was one of the chief publicans, a prominent one amongst them, and rich. Yet apparently his heart was ill at ease. Although he had found his occupation a lucrative one he was not satisfied. Not that he would admit that his riches were all gained by dishonesty, but he realized that some of them were not honestly and honorably obtained. This would probably be true of the majority of rich people. As he heard of the Kingdom of God and the Prophet of Nazareth and his work of miracles, his heart was longing for relationship with God--he wanted to at least see this Prophet. Short of stature, the crowd being large, he had poor opportunity, but he ran ahead of the procession and climbed into a sycamore tree, and, seated on one of its branches over the road, he got a good view of Jesus as he passed by him.

Similarly today to some come longing desires for righteousness, harmony with God and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, and the prospect of eternal life in the Kingdom. How much depends upon the way they entertain this thought! They can turn it aside and say, "It is no use for me to think of reconciliation with the Father and a life of harmony with him; it is no use for me to try to turn over a new leaf. My business is built upon a disreputable foundation; I have already acquired a reputation for dishonesty, which I could never shake off. The new life which this great Teacher Jesus proclaims is no doubt grand for those who can accept it, but I am not one of them." Had Zaccheus followed such suggestions and inclinations he would perhaps have gone in another direction instead of wishing to see more of the Lord.

It is a hopeful sign when we find any desiring to have clearer views of the Lord or his Word or his plan. We would exhort all such to go ahead and climb a sycamore tree and get a good view of matters; peradventure to them, as to Zaccheus, the Lord might speak some word of comfort and encouragement. Let such remember that, if honest hearted and earnest of purpose, some of their natural disadvantages may under the Lord's providence work out for them a blessing, even as Zaccheus found that his smallness of stature brought him more particularly to the Lord's attention than otherwise. But his zeal was necessary, as well as his manifestation of interest and faith.

"SALVATION COME TO THY HOUSE"

We can imagine Zaccheus lying on a limb of a sycamore tree, looking down upon the Lord,

studying the lines of his countenance, wondering whether or not this were the very Christ, and feeling despair in his own heart as he realized his own imperfection and impurity as contrasted with the Master's character, which shone forth in his countenance, speaking purity, gentleness, meekness, patience, love. How surprised he must have been when the Master stopped and looked directly into his eyes and, calling his name, said, "Zaccheus, come down, for I must dine today at thy house." We have here evidences of the Lord's knowledge of what is in man, that he reads the heart and makes no mistakes. Zaccheus was indeed glad to receive him and hastened to come down and to take him to his home. Doubtless there were others in that vicinity not only more highly esteemed amongst men but of still grander and nobler character than Zaccheus, but he had the longing heart, hungering and thirsting for righteousness. To him the blessing came; he should be filled.

What a wonderful opportunity it was to have the Master come to his home! What an honor, what an opportunity for hearing some precious words, instructions, guidance, encouragement! Not all the conversation of that dinner-table is recorded, but sufficient is told to teach the lesson. Whatever the Lord said to him, Zaccheus there made a full surrender of his heart--that henceforth he would not only forsake sin and evil customs and practices, but that so far as possible he would make restitution for wrong doing and injustice. This is of great importance in the Lord's sight. It is in vain that we attempt to make use of God's grace forgiving our sins while we would hold on to money or property obtained from our neighbors by some dishonest practices. Zaccheus gave evidence of a sound conversion when he declared, "If I have wrongly exacted ought from any man, I restore fourfold"--not "I have restored fourfold," but "I will restore fourfold." The intimation here given is that Zaccheus was more than ordinarily upright as a publican, otherwise to have restored fourfold would of itself have ruined a large fortune. On the contrary, Zaccheus consecrated one-half of all his possessions to the poor, and out of what remained he would make good fourfold, four times as much, for all that he had taken unjustly from others, and still he hoped a reasonable competence would be left.

We believe that many today make a great mistake in that they do not more fully follow the course of Zaccheus--in that they continue to hold on to something which really, rightfully, belongs to another; and secondly, that they do not consecrate more of their wealth of money or property or time or talents to the Lord. Zaccheus was a Jew, and under the requirements of the Law one-tenth of

his yearly increase would be his obligation to religious matters. But he far exceeded this, giving not merely a half of his annual income, but a half of all the principal, of all the money and property and goods which he possessed. Some have inquired of us, What is the reasonable obligation of a Christian? We answer that our reasonable service should surely be more than the one-tenth of the Jews. To our understanding Zaccheus did not even go the full length of a complete sacrifice. The hymn expresses our sentiments:--

"All my little life I give thee,
Use it, Lord, in ways of thine."

However, Zaccheus publicly, practically, did this very thing, the difference being that we who live this side of Pentecost, and who consecrate all to the Lord, are in turn by him made stewards to use that all according to our enlightenment day by day in his service.

This question should be settled promptly by all who would grow in grace, in knowledge, in love and character-likeness of our Lord--Have I forsaken sin, and the ways of sin and dishonesty? Have I made ample restitution so far as possible for every injury done to fellow creatures? What have I sacrificed, half of my goods or all of my goods to the Lord and his cause? If as a Christian I have sacrificed all, how am I keeping that engagement, that covenant, that sacrifice? Am I remembering that time and talent and influence as well as money belong to him and are my reasonable service? Am I spending and being spent day by day or not? How will it stand with me when the Master reckons with his people? Will I have joy in rendering my account, or will I with sorrow be obliged to admit that as a steward I have been unfaithful, and have buried my talents in earthly aims and objects and ambitions and services, or will I be able to present to the Lord fruits of my labor and sacrifice, and hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord"?

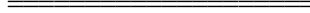
"THEY SHALL BE MINE"

Let us remember the words of the Lord through the Prophet, "Gather together my saints unto me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (*Psa. 50:5*), "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."--*Mal. 3:17*.

Some of those of the multitude who had rejoiced with the blind beggar were greatly disappointed when they found Jesus affiliating with an acknowledged publican. The difficulty was that they had misconceptions and had not yet come to see that the Lord looketh upon the heart, and that in the Lord's sight this humble and grateful publican was nearer to the Kingdom than themselves. Jesus' words to them were, "This day is salvation come to this house." Zaccheus also is a son of Abraham. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Salvation came to his house--not in the complete sense,

for that, as the Apostle says, is to be brought unto us at the revelation, the second coming of our Lord and Savior. But salvation came to him in the sense that his heart was turned from sin and selfishness toward God and righteousness. Zaccheus that day, under the Lord's favor and blessing and instruction, and his own cooperation in the same, in the turning over of a new leaf and becoming a follower of the teachings of Jesus, was saved in a

reckoned sense--in the sense that he no longer loved the ways of sin, but now loved the ways of righteousness --in the sense that he was no longer walking after the things of the flesh, but now was walking after the things of the Spirit, the things of God, the things of righteousness, the things of truth, the things most pleasing to the Master, in his footsteps.



Chapter 2: Six Days Before the Crucifixion:

John 12: 1-8

12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

12:2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

12:3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

12:4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], which should betray him,

12:5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

12:6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

12:8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

Mark 14:3-9

14:3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured [it] on his head.

14:4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

14:5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

14:6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

14:7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

14:8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

14:9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, [this] also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

Matthew 26:6-13

26:6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

26:7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat [at meat].

26:8 But when his disciples saw [it], they had indignation, saying, To what purpose [is] this waste?

26:9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

26:10 When Jesus understood [it], he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

26:11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

26:12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did [it] for my burial.

26:13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, [there] shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

A BOTTLE OF SPIKENARD, VERY COSTLY. -

-APRIL 9.--*JOHN 12:1-11.*—

"She hath done what she could."--*Mark 14:8.*

THE last week of our Lord's earthly ministry was a busy one. The sixth day previous to the Passover was the Jewish Sabbath, which ended at six o'clock in the evening, and it is possible that it was at that time that our Lord and his disciples were entertained by Martha and Mary at "the house of Simon the leper" --probably their father: Lazarus, their brother, whose recovery from death was noted in the previous lesson, was also one of the table-guests.

Our Lord knew that the time of his death was near at hand, and he had given intimations of this to his beloved disciples, but they were so accustomed to having him say wonderful things beyond the power of their comprehension that they probably failed to realize their closeness to the great tragedy of Calvary. This need not surprise us when we remember the Scriptural declaration that our Lord spake in parables and dark sayings --"and without a parable spake he not unto the people:" for instance, his declaration, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." And again, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man shall eat of this bread he shall live forever." And again, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (*John 2:19; 6:51,53.*) Having in mind such unusual language, the apostles would be entirely excusable in doubting the proper meaning to be attached to our Lord's declaration, "The Son of man must be lifted up," and other similar expressions foretelling his death.

Before coming to the consideration of the Bethany supper and the anointing on that Sabbath evening, let us have before our minds the incidents of the days following it, that we may be able to appreciate our Lord's declaration that the anointing with the spikenard was preparatory to his burial. The next morning (the first day of the week, now usually called Sunday), having sent after the ass, our Lord rode upon it to Jerusalem. The people, recognizing the wonderful miracle wrought upon Lazarus, congregated and hailed him as Messiah, the Son of David, fulfilling the prophecy of *Zechariah (9:9)*, and strewed clothing and palm branches in the way; (hence this is generally known as Palm Sunday). It was on this occasion that our Lord wept over Jerusalem, and declared, "Your house is left unto you desolate." --*Matt. 23:38.*

It is supposed that it was on the second day (Monday) that our Lord scourged the money-changers

out of the Temple, and taught the people there; and we gather from the narrative that it was in his journey on this day that he pronounced the curse upon "the barren fig tree," supposed to represent the Jewish nation--barren of fruit, and therefore rejected. It would appear that the third day (Tuesday) was again spent teaching in the Temple, answering questions, etc., and that evening, as they returned again to Bethany, he discoursed with his disciples respecting the great events near at hand. The fourth day (Wednesday) apparently was spent quietly at Bethany, and on the fifth day (Thursday) the disciples made ready the Passover supper which was eaten after six o'clock that evening--the beginning of the sixth day (Friday) according to Jewish reckoning--the 14th of Nisan. The Gethsemane experiences followed that night and the trial before Pilate the next morning, and the crucifixion later.

Now we come back to witness the hospitalities extended to our Lord six days before the crucifixion, at the house of Simon the leper, the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus. We are to remember that our Lord was a visitor in those parts, his home, to the extent that he ever had one, being in Galilee, and the most of his time spent there. "He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." (*John 7:1.*) But now the time for his sacrifice had come, and in harmony therewith he came amongst his enemies,--altho it was known that prominent Jews sought to kill him and also sought the death of Lazarus, who was a living witness to his Messianic power.

We may suppose that this was no ordinary supper, but in the nature of a feast or banquet in our Lord's honor. Nevertheless, one incident connected with it so outshone all its other features that the narrator mentions it alone--the anointing of our Lord with the "spikenard ointment, very costly." Our Lord himself declared, "Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." (*Mark 14:9.*) It is entirely proper, therefore, that we should examine with some particularity the details of this service so highly esteemed by the Master.

Prof. Shaff says, "By the 'ointment' we are to understand rather a liquid perfume than what we commonly know as ointment." The alabaster box was rather in the shape of a flask or vase, and the breaking of the box (*Mark 14:3*) signifies the opening of its tyings and seals by which the precious odors were confined.

Judas' words of dissatisfaction furnish us a clue respecting the costliness of this perfume, for he says that it "might have been sold for three hundred *denarii*." A *denarius*, translated "penny" in *vs. 5*, is represented as being the average daily wages at that time--"a penny [*denarius*] a day." (*Matt. 20:2*.) If we compare these values with present money values, counting farm labor at fifty cents a day (which is certainly a moderate valuation), the three hundred *denarii* would be the equivalent in wages of one hundred and fifty dollars of our money. Thus we see that the perfume was indeed "very costly." There was nearly a pint of the perfume, a Roman pound being twelve ounces. Nor need we question the possibility of perfumes being so expensive, for even to-day we have a counterpart in value in the attar of roses made in the far East. It is claimed that four hundred thousand full-grown roses are used to produce one ounce of this perfume, which, in its purity, sells as high as one hundred dollars an ounce, or twelve hundred dollars for the quantity used by Mary in anointing our Lord. It is said that Nero was the first of the Emperors to indulge in the use of costly perfumes for his anointing; but one much more worthy of tribute, homage and anointing with a sweet perfume was the "Prince of the kings of the earth," whom Mary had the honor to anoint.

Judas was first to object to this as a waste--the difficulty with him being that he loved the Lord too little and money too much. The amount that love is willing to expend for others is, to some extent at least, a measure of the love. Another Evangelist informs us that several of the disciples, under the influence of Judas' words, took the same view of the matter, and spoke disapprovingly of Mary's action. The Apostle John, however, takes this opportunity to throw a little sidelight upon the character of Judas--more than is apparent in the common translation of *vs. 6*. His declaration is, "Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the box, and stole what things were deposited in it."--*Diaglott*.

Our Lord's words, "Let her alone!" are in the nature of a severe reproof to those whose sentiments of love had no other measure than that of money. It was indeed true that there were plenty of poor, and there would still be plenty of poor, and plenty of opportunities to minister to them; but the opportunity to specially honor the Lord, and to pour upon him the fragrant odors so beautifully expressive of Mary's love and devotion, would not be for long, and our Lord declares that the circumstances fully justified the costly expenditure. He shows himself out of sympathy with the sentiments which balance themselves too

accurately with money values. Moreover, we may esteem that in many instances like the one here recorded the persons who are so careful lest money should be spent except for the poor are often like Judas, so avaricious that whatever money gets into their possession very little of it gets to the poor.

On the contrary, it is the deep, loving, benevolent hearts, like that of Mary, which delight in costly sacrifices at times, which also are likely to be deeply sympathetic and helpful to the physically poor. And in our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need--some need love and sympathy, who do not need money. Our Lord was one of these: his own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented amongst his apostles. In Mary he seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic: and Mary apparently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Master's character; she not only delighted to sit at his feet to learn of him, but now delighted, at a great cost, to give him some manifestation of her devotion, her love.

She poured the perfume first upon our Lord's head (*Mark 14:3*), the usual custom, and then the remainder she poured upon his feet. But the Apostle John, in recording the matter, seems to have forgotten entirely the anointing of our Lord's head, so deeply was he impressed with the still more expressive devotion manifested in the anointing of the feet and the wiping of them with the hairs of her head. It is indeed a picture of love--a devotion well worthy of being told as a memorial. Some one has said,--

"She took 'woman's chief ornament' and devoted it to wiping the travel-stained feet of her Teacher; she devoted the best she had to even the least honorable service for him. It was the strongest possible expression of her love and devotion. She gave her choicest treasures in the most self-devoted manner. She was bashful and retiring, and could not speak her feelings, and therefore she expressed them in this manner."

We are not surprised to learn that the whole house was filled with the odor; and we doubt not that the odor remained for a long time: but far more precious than that was the sweet odor of Mary's heart-affections which the Lord accepted and will never forget, and the sweet odor of her devotion which has come down through the centuries to us, bringing blessing to all true hearts who have honored her service and desired to emulate her conduct.

It is not our privilege to come into personal

contact with our dear Redeemer, but we have, nevertheless, many opportunities for doing that which to some extent will correspond to Mary's act--it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto his brethren, we do or do not unto him. (*Matt. 25:40,45.*) Moreover, he represents these "brethren" in a figure as "members of his body;" and from this standpoint we see that, while it is not our privilege to pour the perfume upon the Head of the body, now highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named--next to the Father,--it is our privilege to pour the perfume upon the feet of Christ--the last living members of his Church of this Gospel age.

We know not to what extent the closing years of this Gospel age may correspond to the closing days of our Lord's ministry--we know not how similar may be the experiences of the "feet" of the body of Christ to the experiences of the Head of the body; we do know, however, that in any event it is our blessed privilege to comfort one another, to encourage one another, to sustain one another, in the trials incident to our "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (*Col. 1:24.*) And to whatever extent we would improve these opportunities, as did Mary, we must first appreciate them as she did.

Nothing in this suggestion is intended to imply any neglect of the members of our natural families "according to the flesh:" attentions to these are proper always, and are generally so understood, and should

more and more be appreciated and used in proportion as the Lord's people receive freely and fully of his spirit of love,-- kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering. But we emphasize that which the Scriptures emphasize, namely, that our interest and efforts are not to be confined to those of fleshly tie, but, on the contrary, are to be "especially to the household of faith." (*Gal. 6:10.*) There will be other and future opportunities of doing good to mankind in general, but the opportunity for serving "the body of Christ" is limited to the present age.

Apropos of this propriety of doing good to others -- expressing our love by our conduct as well as by our words, to the members of our families as well as to the members of the body of Christ, we quote the words of another,--

"The sweetest perfume that the home circle ever knows arises from deeds of loving service which its members do for each other. The sweetest perfumes of our homes do not arise from elegant furniture, soft carpets, elegant pictures, or luxurious viands. Many a home, having all these, is pervaded by an atmosphere as tasteless and odorless as bouquets of waxen flowers."

Another has said,--

"If my friends have alabaster boxes full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I might be refreshed and cheered with them while I need them....I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy.... Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

=====

Z '00, 376 – 380; Reprint 2743

A PERFUME OF SWEET ODOR.

--*MATT. 26:6-16.*--JAN. 6.—

"She hath done what she could."

PRECEDING LESSONS showed us incidents in our Lord's journey toward Jerusalem, via Jericho --the healing of the blind men by the wayside, the conversion of Zacchaeus, and the parable of the young nobleman, given because they were nigh unto Jerusalem, and because the disciples and many of the multitude expected that the Kingdom of God would immediately be manifested,--set up in earthly grandeur, etc. The distance from Jericho to Jerusalem was only about twenty miles, and Bethany, the home-

city of Lazarus (whom our Lord raised from the dead) and his two sisters, Martha and Mary, was quite near to Jerusalem and with them Jesus decided to spend his last Sabbath-day in the flesh. We may presume that the day was happily spent according to the observance of the Sabbath required by the Jewish law; but the narrative, passing over the events of the day unnoticed, draws special attention to the feast or supper made for our Lord in the evening, after sundown, when the Sabbath was

considered ended, and the first day of the week beginning.

This feast was at the house of Simon the leper, yet Simon is not mentioned in connection with the narrative, and it is quite probable that he was then dead. It is conjectured that Simon was either the father of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, or else that Martha was the widow of Simon, and that Lazarus and Mary were younger than she. These items, however, are merely tradition, nothing in the Scriptures throwing any light upon the matter. We remember that on the occasion of a previous visit to this home, our Lord was entertained; and Mary became so absorbed in listening to the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth that for the time she neglected the ordinary affairs of life, until her more practical, but possibly less spiritually-inclined, sister commented upon the fact, which brought forth our Lord's declaration to the effect that while service is quite acceptable and appreciated, veneration and fellowship are still more appreciated--"Mary hath chosen the better part."

The two sisters had the enviable privilege of serving the Lord and ministering to his comfort in the feast of our lesson, just before the agonies which closed his earthly life. As before, so now, the service of the two sisters took somewhat different form, but probably this time by mutual agreement and prearrangement; Martha herself served the table with others assisting, and Mary was left free to render her peculiar service, of which this lesson is a memorial. From some source she had procured a valuable alabaster vase of choice perfume. She had either purchased the vase, and manufactured the perfume herself, at great expense of time, etc., or had spent for its purchase a considerable sum of money. She had anticipated our Lord's coming, and had fully arranged matters so that at this feast she might treat him in a manner in which very few except the worldly great were ever treated;--kings, emperors, etc., were thus anointed with perfume, but very rarely indeed could others afford such a luxury, for the facilities for manufacturing perfume then were quite inferior to what they are now, and even if the perfume were of home manufacture and of fine quality the cost in time, etc., would be great, and the perfume would be so valuable that it was usual to sell it to the very wealthy.

The feast had begun, and Jesus, with the disciples and other guests, were at the table, which, according to eastern custom, was long and narrow, the guests not sitting upon chairs, but reclining full length upon couches or divans, with the head extending over the table, and the feet extending back to the rear, the weight of the shoulders poised upon the left elbow, while the right hand was used in partaking of the food.

While Martha and her associates were serving, Mary came forward and, breaking the seal upon her alabaster vase, she began to pour the precious perfume upon our Lord's head, and subsequently, as John's record of the matter informs us, going to our Lord's feet she poured some of it upon them, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Mary's affection for our Lord was so deep and so strong that it could not be satisfied with any of the ordinary methods of expression. If the kings of earth were perfumed and anointed, much more did she esteem it fitting that her friend, her Lord, the Messiah, should be anointed with the best that she could procure for him. Her love was so intense that it knew no economy--nothing could be too good for her Beloved. She would give expression to the rich sentiments of her heart by giving him the finest and most costly of sweet natural odors. Our Lord appreciated the matter fully--the sweet odor of the heart-love which prompted the act, still more than the sweet odors which filled the entire house.

But the disciples, more selfish and less able to appreciate Mary's true sentiments, and the propriety of their expression in this form, found fault with her, and the records show that their leader and mouthpiece, who incited the fault-finding spirit amongst the others, was Judas, the treasurer of the little company, whose disappointment was great that the value of this ointment did not find its way into his money-bag, and thus a part of it, at least, to his own private uses; for we are told, "He was a thief, and carried the bag." His objection seems to favor the thought that Mary may have prepared the perfume herself, for he does not object to its having been *purchased* for a large sum, but that it might have been *sold* for three hundred pence. (*Mark 14:5*.) Estimating the value at 300 Roman pence, or *denarii*, worth about 16 cents each, the value of the ointment would be about forty-eight dollars, but much more than this amount would be represented in today's values; for we are to remember that a *denarius* represented a workman's wages for a day, and hence that 300 *denarii* would practically represent a workman's wages for a year. It was indeed an extravagant action, but it represented an extravagant love, and was expended upon one whom God and the angels delighted to honor, and whom Mary seems to have appreciated much more nearly at his true value than did his other associates of the hour.

Beloved Mary! We can, perhaps, imagine to some extent the emotions which filled her heart as she prepared this costly expression of her devotion, the sentiment of which she hoped others would appreciate. But now, on the contrary, she beholds the "indignation" of her friends and guests, the Master's nearest companions; and her heart sinks within her as she fears that the Lord himself will view the matter in a similar

light, and reject and disapprove her libation. What a load is lifted from her heart, when she hears our Lord pronouncing her work a noble deed, and reproving his disciples for lack of sympathy in her sentiment, telling them that this perfuming of his body was in preparation for his burial. It was probably in the midst of this discussion of the matter between Jesus and the apostles that Mary, having anointed his head with the perfume, went to his feet, and began anointing them also, wiping them with her hair, as an evidence that the most precious thing of her personal adornment was gladly at the service of her Lord.

Probably Mary had no thought of perfuming our Lord's body for burial, and his words to this effect would be as astounding to her as to the others who heard them. It was customary with the ancients to spend considerable care and money upon the persons of their dead in preparing them for burial; sweet spices and perfumes, etc., were lavishly bestowed, just as today it is the custom to provide handsome caskets and many and expensive flowers and fine monuments, as expressive of the love and appreciation in which the dead are held by their friends. In Mary's conduct in the pouring of the precious perfume upon the Savior while he was yet living, we have a most excellent suggestion in respect to the proper course to be pursued toward those we love. It is far, far better that we should unstop our alabaster vases of perfume, and pour them upon the heads and upon the weary feet of our friends, while still they live, than that we should wait until they have expired, and then give our attention to the cold, inanimate and unappreciative corpse. Our alabaster boxes are our hearts, which should be full of the richest and sweetest perfumes of good wishes, kindness and love toward all, but especially toward the Christ--toward the Head of Christ, our Lord Jesus, and toward all the members of his body, the Church; and especially on our part toward the feet members who are now with us, and on whom we now have the privilege of pouring out the sweet odors of love and devotion in the name of the Lord, and because we are his. The poet writes:

"How oft we, careless, wait till life's sweet activities
are past,

And break our 'alabaster box of ointment' at the very
last!

O, let us heed the living friend, who walks with us
life's common ways,

Watching our eyes for looks of love, and hungering for
a word of praise!"

The heart of each truly consecrated child of God is like the alabaster vase,--a receptacle for the holy spirit, the spirit of love, the choicest perfume and most precious to the Lord and to men. It is expensive,

because it cannot be gathered rapidly, but requires patient perseverance in well-doing to be "filled with all the fulness of God." Again, it is like Mary's vase in that it gives forth its odor not before, but after the seal is broken and the contents poured forth. It differs from hers, however, in the fact that it may be continually poured out and yet its fulness all the while increase.

Our hearts and their holy love are like Mary's vase again, in that they should be poured upon the Lord himself--upon the Head first, but subsequently upon the members of his body, even the humblest, the lowliest, the feet. And this should be our service, even tho it be unappreciated by others, who instead would think that we should pour our love and devotion upon sinners, or upon the poor heathen world. They realize not what abundant opportunities there will be for blessing the heathen world in the future, in the Millennial age, which God has set apart for their blessing, and in which his disciples will have abundant opportunity for co-working with him in the general uplifting of the world of mankind. Those who upbraid us for pouring out our heart-treasures upon the members of Christ, the Church, do so through ignorance, and if at times it has caused some discouragement to us, let us hearken to the words of the Master, declaring that such is a noble course that has his approval, and that it is proper as a prelude to the burial of the entire Church, the body;--that it will be appropriate that this shall be done to the Church rather than for the poor world, up to the time when the Church shall have finished the earthly pilgrimage;--up to the time when the sufferings of Christ having been fulfilled there shall be no longer opportunity to bless and refresh and comfort the body of Christ, respecting whom our Lord declares that what is done to them is done to him.--***Matt. 25:40.***

So, then, let the Marthas serve the Lord in one way, and the Marys pour out their most precious spikenard perfume, assured that neither service will be forgotten; for both are told and have been told for eighteen centuries, as memorials to their praise, testimonies of their love, which the Lord appreciated and accepted, however they were viewed by others.

OPPOSITION FROM SELFISH HEARTS.

In this connection it is well to notice sharply that the one who made the greatest ado on behalf of the poor, and who objected most to Mary's expression of her devotion, was the thief and murderer, Judas. And the principle, to a considerable extent, seems to hold good all down throughout this Gospel age: that those who make the greatest outcry on behalf of mission work and in opposition to the expenditure of costly time in the anointing and blessing of the consecrated members of

the body of Christ, are not always those who have the interests of the heathen exclusively at heart, but are frequently those who have an "axe to grind," a selfish interest in some way to serve. And not infrequently these hypocrites mislead others of the Lord's dear people, who are thoroughly conscientious, even as Judas, by his sophistry, for a time misled the other apostles into indignation against Mary for the doing of the very thing which was pleasing to the Lord, and on account of which he decreed that wherever this Gospel should be preached her conduct should be mentioned as a memorial.

And so it is today: this gospel is preached in more than 350 languages--to every important nation in the world. But we presume that it was not merely Mary that our Lord wished to memorialize, but especially her deed: he wished that all who should know the good tidings should know also of his appreciation of such devotion to him, to his body, and that the more it costs us the more he appreciates it. In view of this, let each one who would be pleasing in the Lord's sight seek continually to pour the perfume from his heart and life upon other members of the body of Christ, and let him realize that in so doing he will not only be pleasing to the Lord, but will be receiving also a blessing himself; for as no alabaster vase could pour forth perfumes upon others without itself being thoroughly involved in the perfume, so our hearts, as they pour forth upon others of the members of the body the sweet perfume of love and devotion to the Lord and his cause, will be sure to bring a blessing to ourselves, even in the present life --our Lord's approval and benediction now and everlastingly.

Some of the methods employed in connection with present endeavor to anoint the members of the Lord's "body" for burial,--with the perfume of his truth and grace--call down the condemnation of fellow-disciples. As for instance, the expenditure of time, energy, and large sums of money this present year in the "Volunteer" work has been, and will be misunderstood by many of the Lord's dear children,--and be *bitterly* reprov'd by those who are of the Judas stripe. Yet realizing the Lord's approval we have quite sufficient to make our cup of joy overflow. Fellow-disciples tell us that we should not be handing the meat in due season to the household of faith, but to sinners; that we should not be seeking to anoint the saints with the sweet perfume of present truth, but should, on the contrary, be going to the outcasts of society, engaging in slum-work or in foreign-mission work. The real difficulty with the Judas class, however, is that they fear that the circulation of the truth amongst the Lord's people would cut off the revenue which otherwise might flow into their coffers:

they fear the loss of numbers and influence in sectarianism. But their fears are largely imaginary; for the perfume of the truth is only designed to fall upon "the members of the body of Christ," and our expectations are that the Lord will guide it to these, and that to others it will be of no effect. And since the members of the body of Christ, the consecrated ones, are so few, their anointing and their separation from Babylon, and their burial, will be comparatively unnoticed so far as numbers are concerned,--tho their taking away as the "salt" and the "light" of those systems, will indeed be a serious loss, conspiring to their downfall in the great time of trouble approaching. --***Matt. 5:13,14.***

Let us not forget to note clearly and distinctly the wide difference between love and selfishness, as exemplified in the opposite courses of Mary and Judas. Mary, full of burning devotion, was willing to sacrifice much to honor, comfort and please her Lord. Judas not only was unwilling to sacrifice on his behalf, but on the contrary was willing to sell him to his enemies for thirty shekels--the price of a slave. Not only so, but the devotion of the one seemed not to impress the other favorably, but rather the reverse; the devotion of Mary, and our Lord's approval of it, seem to have aroused the opposite spirit in Judas, for he went straightway to negotiate with the chief priests for our Lord's betrayal into their hands.

It would appear from the Greek text, and the rendering of the same in the Revised Version, that Judas received the money for his work in advance: "They weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver." He completed the contract; he sold himself to work evil, and that against his benefactor, his Lord, of whose power he was fully conversant, and of which, indeed, he had received so abundantly that he himself had been enabled to heal the sick and cast out devils. How strange that any could be so perverse! No doubt he had a way of reasoning the matter to himself which made his crime appear to him less heinous than it does to us. No doubt, also, others who today are willing less directly to sell the Lord for earthly advantage or influence or money find ways of excusing their perfidy; but in proportion as our hearts are loyal and devoted, as was Mary's, in that same proportion will the Judas course appear heinous and impossible to us.

Yet these climaxes of character are not reached suddenly. Mary's love had been growing from the first; it was greatly strengthened by her course in sitting at the Master's feet and receiving from him spiritual nourishment, which our Lord declared to be a still better part or course than that pursued by her sister, tho the latter was not disapproved. Mary's faith and love had been still further increased as she witnessed the Lord's power in various ways, and especially at her brother's

awakening from the tomb. She had cultivated this love and appreciation for the Lord until it filled her entire heart, and found its expression in the costly libation which she had just poured upon his head and his feet. Judas, on the other hand, had long been permitting the spirit of selfishness to more and more intrude upon his heart; he had permitted himself to think of what money would do, and had given his thought largely toward its accumulation. It had fettered his soul, so that he was unable to appreciate the Lord's character, even tho he knew him intimately from daily association, so that he was unable to measure anything except from a

monetary standpoint. And these bands of selfishness gradually grew so hard and tight about his heart that they squeezed out everything of character, of love, devotion and friendship, and thus gradually he came to be the representative of, and his name the synonym for, the grossest of ingratitude and meanness, selfishness and treachery. One lesson for us here is, to *cultivate* love and the appreciation of whatsoever things are just, good, lovely and pure; and to fight down and eradicate so far as possible (especially from our own hearts and lives) everything selfish, mean, ignoble, dishonorable.

Z '05, 103 – 107; Reprint 3534

PERFUME VERY PRECIOUS.

JOHN 12:1-11.--APRIL 16.

Golden Text:--"She hath done what she could."--Mark 14:8.

IT WAS Saturday night, as we reckon it, the evening following the Jewish Sabbath day--after six P.M.--that Jesus and his disciples and Lazarus, whom he had previously awakened from the sleep of death, with some other friends of the family, sat down to a feast prepared in special honor of Jesus at the home of his friends, where he was always welcome and where he stopped more frequently than at any other house during the period of his ministry, so far as the records show. It was at Bethany, the home of Lazarus and Martha and Mary. It was called the house of Simon the leper, one supposition being that Simon was the father of the family, and another that he was the husband of Martha, who at this time was a widow. Our Lord and his disciples were en route for Jerusalem, and Bethany was on the way, in the suburbs. They probably arrived on what would correspond to our Friday, or the Jewish sixth day of the week. Expecting them, Martha and Mary had provided quite a sumptuous feast, and, in harmony with the Jewish rules governing in such cases, the dishes were evidently prepared in advance, as Sabbath labor was prohibited. No account is given us of that Sabbath day at Bethany, but we can well imagine the delightful social intercourse between the dear members of that family and the Lord and his chosen apostles.

JESUS IN SOCIAL LIFE.

The Master's words of wisdom and love are not recorded, but we know on the best of authority that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Hence we may know that

the day was not given over to frivolity of word or conduct, but to rest, spiritual enjoyment, which minister to the refreshment of all in the right attitude of heart. The same rule applies to all of the Lord's followers wherever they may be, whatever may be their vocation or surroundings. Out of the good treasure of their hearts they can bring forth nothing else but good things, and if any be otherwise minded let him beware, and correct the difficulty of the heart and not merely of the head.

We can imagine better than we can portray the loving sentiments of Lazarus and his sisters toward Jesus, the one they esteemed so highly, the one who, by calling Lazarus forth from the tomb, had demonstrated his Messiahship and that in him was the resurrection and the life power. This was probably the first visit the Lord had made to the Bethany home since that great event.

Apparently our Lord had friends in various walks of life; a few were rich, some were poor, some in moderate circumstances. The Bethany household was apparently of a comfortable class, as was evidenced by the fact that they had their own home, that they had their own tomb, and that on this occasion Mary was able as well as willing to spend a considerable sum of money in doing honor to the Lord by anointing him with the very precious spikenard. This reminds us of the prayer of one of old, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." Riches are a great snare to the many, and the Lord's word assures us that not many rich will enter the Kingdom. The attractions of the present life to them will prove too powerful and hinder their fulfilment of their consecration vows--to sacrifice their all, to lay all at Jesus' feet, to become merely his stewards in the use of their temporal opportunities and blessings, and to use these wisely in

his service and in such a manner as to demonstrate the love and loyalty they have professed.

In many respects to have a moderate competency in life is very desirable, permitting a more generous treatment of others, greater hospitality, etc.; yet even moderate prosperity seems to be more than the majority can stand and yet be faithful. Consequently we find in fact what our Lord declared, namely, that the heirs of the Kingdom are chiefly of the poor of this world-- chiefly of those who have little and who have little hope for getting more, and whose minds consequently are more readily turned to the heavenly things which the Lord has promised to those who love him supremely.

To whatever extent, therefore, we have comfortable surroundings, such as were possessed by the Bethany household--to whatever extent we have the good things of this present life--in that same proportion we need to be specially on guard against the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches and the ambitions and hopes and aims of the world, lest these should lead our hearts away from the loyalty and devotion to the Lord and his cause which full faith and trust should inspire and sustain. Evidently it is possible to be poor in spirit without being actually in poverty, but the more there is of earthly prosperity apparently more grace is needed to keep us in the narrow way.

"OINTMENT OF SPIKENARD VERY COSTLY."

The two sisters evidently had the matter planned between them: Martha served at the table and Mary served in an especial manner with the ointment. Oriental tables were a combination of couch and table, and the guests were properly described as reclining at a feast. It was customary to rest the forepart of the body upon one elbow while using the other hand to convey the food to the mouth, etc. Our Lord thus reclining, both his head and his feet were very conveniently accessible to Mary, who proceeded to anoint first his head and afterward his feet with the ointment.

The word ointment gives rather a misimpression; the word perfume would more nearly describe the liquid used. Its value is incidentally mentioned as more than three hundred pence (v. 5). These silver pence represent about sixteen cents each, and thus estimated the alabaster flask of perfume was worth about forty-eight dollars; but counting each penny or *denarius* as a day's wages at that time (*Matt. 20:2*), the three hundred pence would be equivalent to a year's wages of a working man, or about three hundred dollars to six hundred dollars as compared with our day.

This was very precious ointment indeed by whichever calculation we reckon it, yet that the statement is not overdrawn is attested by ancient literature. For

instance, we are told that Horace offered to give a cask of wine for a very small box of spikenard--Odes, Ovid, IV, XII, XVII. A perfume even in our day has been rated as high as \$100.00 per ounce, namely, attar of roses. At this price, Mary's "pound" would have been worth \$1,200.00.

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

The use of such expensive perfumes was very rare: indeed, even the emperors used it sparingly, but when used it was generally poured upon the head. Mary followed this custom in pouring it upon the Lord's head, as Matthew and Mark recount; but having done this, she proceeded to his feet and anointed them with the perfume, and then wiped his feet with the long tresses of her hair. What a picture of loving devotion is here given us! The feet, always recognized as the humblest and lowest members of the human frame--the hair of the head, especially of woman, always recognized as a special treasure and glory to her--here thus brought together in a way which signified that Mary esteemed her Lord and Master as infinitely above and beyond her. She had recognized him first as the most wonderful of men, speaking as never man spake; she had come afterwards to understand that he was a great teacher, especially sent at a special time; and finally, through the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death, she had evidence that the power of the Almighty was in him, that he was none other than the Son of God, and she appropriately did him the reverence due to his exalted station.

She could not put him on the throne of earth, but she would show that she was his devoted servant forever; she could not glorify him before all the people of Israel, but she could glorify and honor him in her own home; she could not tell his praises and sing his worth, but she could sing and make melody in her own heart, and pour upon him a perfume which not only filled her home with its sweet savor, but which has yielded a tender fragrance to the honor of womankind in general from her day to the present time. "She hath done what she could," said the Lord--she has shown her devotion to the best of her ability. How true the remainder of our Lord's prophecy on the subject, "Wherever this Gospel is preached, this thing shall be told as a memorial of her." A sweet memorial of a sweet character and loving heart. Considered in the light of the odor and blessing and refreshment which it has shed upon all of the Lord's people throughout this Gospel age, Mary's alabaster jar of precious perfume, very costly, has proven to be extremely cheap.

"MIGHT HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO THE POOR."

Our lesson says that Judas protested against such a waste of money, and explains that it was not because he cared so much for the poor, as that he was a thief and regretted

that the amount spent for the perfume had not been handed to him as the treasurer for the group of disciples, so that he might have misappropriated it to himself. This thought is more particularly shown in the revised version, which renders it, "He was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein." Matthew says "the disciples"--Mark says, "There were some"--but John mentions Judas only as doing this murmuring against the expense involved in Mary's service to her Lord. Quite probably all the accounts are correct. Judas, no doubt, was the instigator of the murmuring, some more quickly and more thoroughly shared his sentiments, and the remainder of the apostles, probably influenced by the majority, were inclined to yield and to agree that the extravagance was wrong. But Jesus set the whole matter at rest in a few words, saying, "Let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she kept this. The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always."

Many of the Lord's disciples to-day need to reconstruct their ideas on the subject of economy. True, it is necessary for us to be provident not wasteful, and economical not extravagant. Our Lord frequently inculcated this lesson, as, for instance, when he directed the gathering up of the fragments of broken food after feeding the multitude. But there is a proper place to draw the line. The person who is economical and penurious in his dealings with the Lord is sure to be the loser thereby, as the Scriptures declare, "The liberal soul shall be made fat;" and again, "There is he that scattereth yet increaseth, and there is he that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty."

It is a different matter for us to learn to be economical in respect to our own affairs and to be liberal to the extent of extravagance in matters which pertain to the Lord and his service. We sometimes sing, "Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee bring," but he who brings large petitions to the throne of grace should be sure also that he bring with him a large alabaster box of perfume for the Lord--not hoping thereby to merit the Lord's favor nor to perfume his requests, but as a mark of his appreciation of blessings already received. Those who bring the alabaster boxes of perfume of praise and thankfulness very generally have little to ask. Rather they realize that they are already debtors to such an extent that they can never show properly their appreciation of divine favor. Properly they recognize that day by day they are receiving at the Lord's hands exceedingly and abundantly more than they could ask or wish, and that in the spiritual blessings alone they have what satisfies their longings as nothing else can do. Such more nearly follow the course of Mary and bring alabaster boxes of perfume to the Lord--their prayers and thanksgiving of heart; and asking nothing, but giving

thanks for all things, they receive from the Master such an outpour of blessing that they are not able to contain it. Those who view the matter rightly must certainly feel that none of us have anything worthy to present to our Lord--that our very best, our most costly gifts or sacrifices, are not worthy of him and but feebly express the real sentiments of our hearts. How glad we are if our humble efforts are accepted of the Lord, and how we hope that ultimately we shall hear the same sweet voice saying of us, "He hath done what he could," "She hath done what she could."

The poet Tennyson beautifully pictures the scene we have been considering in the following lines:--

"Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.
"Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.
"All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears."

THE POOR EVER WITH US.

Our Lord's prophecy that poverty would continue throughout this Gospel age has been amply fulfilled. Looking forward into the future, we rejoice to know that then, under the reign of the Kingdom, there will be no more poor, no more sorrow, no more want. "Every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make him afraid." Those changed conditions will not be the result of human evolution, human theories, co-operative societies, unions, trusts, etc. All these various panaceas for making everybody rich and comfortable and happy have failed in the past and will continue to be failures in the future. Because of sin warping and twisting the very fibers of humanity, and through selfishness and ambition and desire working upon the warped and twisted elements of humanity, pain, suffering and want are sure to continue as long as sin continues. And sin is sure to continue until the great Messiah takes to himself his great power and reigns, and subdues sin and all that is contrary to righteousness and truth and establishes the latter upon the earth.

Until that glorious day shall come, all through the night of weeping, for now more than eighteen hundred centuries, the poor have been with us and many of them have been the Lord's precious ones. Poverty has proven itself a blessing in many ways in many senses of the word under present conditions. Not only does the fact of poverty and the fear of poverty help to keep many in line and make them active in the battle of life, and thus develop in them overcoming qualities, but, on the other

hand, the fact that there is poverty, the fact that we have friends and neighbors who need our care and need assistance, is a blessing to those who are more comfortably situated themselves, in that it develops their sympathy, patience, love, their desire to do good, their desire to help. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord and the Lord will repay him. This promise is so rich and so plainly stated that the wonder is that there are not more willing to make investments in harmony with it, and to realize that the Lord not only repays, but gives large interest.

"ME YE HAVE NOT ALWAYS."

The opportunity for honoring the Lord was limited --a little while and his sufferings would be ended and he would be glorified, beyond the evil, beyond the power of human attention. It was appropriate then, when viewed from the right standpoint, that Mary should spend a great price upon her Lord--that the head upon which fell the slanders and anathemas of the chief priests and doctors of divinity of that day, and upon which shortly the crown of thorns would be placed, should now be honored by one amongst a few of those who realized his true worth, his true grandeur, his Kingship, that he was indeed the Son of God. It was appropriate, too, that those feet which had trodden the valleys and hillsides of Palestine, and that were so weary at times, and that symbolized the feet of consecration treading the narrow, rugged way, and that so soon would be pierced with the nails on the cross, should now be highly honored by one who appreciated and trusted them, who loved them and who was seeking to walk in the Master's steps.

When we get the right view of the matter, we can indeed sympathize with our Lord's expression, "Let her alone," Trouble her not, Take it not from her--as though when the first motion was made to use the spikenard the apostles had wished to have it spared that they might sell it, and as though our Lord hindered them from using persuasion to that end, saying, Let her alone, do not hinder her.

Spikenard Mary represents one of the most beautiful elements of Christian character amongst the Lord's people from that day until the present. For be it remembered that the entire Church of Christ in the largest sense is the "body of Christ," as expressed by Jesus and also by the apostles. The Mary class, who would rather purchase perfume at a great cost whereby to serve the anointed Church, the body of Christ, than to spend the same upon themselves, is still with us, and has been of the Church for these eighteen centuries. Not only was the Head of the body anointed, perfumed, honored, comforted, cheered, but all of the members since have likewise received a blessing from this class, this spikenard Mary class. It is composed not always of the orators, the wealthy or the wise--its

ministry is unostentatious and to many, especially of the world, it seems foolishness and waste--but the Lord appreciates it, and so do the members of his body who are comforted and refreshed thereby. Blessing be upon this Mary class!

HONOR TO MEMBERS--HONOR TO HEAD.

But if there have been members all the way down who have been comforted in this way, should we not expect some particular blessing of the kind in the end of this age, upon the "feet" members? According to our understanding we are now in the closing of this age --the Head has been glorified, many of the members of the body have passed beyond the veil, and only the feet are here. Perhaps this very picture of Mary's anointing the feet of our Lord as well as his head constitutes a type or picture of what we may expect in this present time. And here comes in a beautiful feature of the divine arrangement--we may all be of the Mary class as well as of the feet class. In other words, each member of the body of Christ may to some extent serve the fellow-members of the body, the fellow-members of the feet, as Mary served the feet of Jesus.

Let each one of the Lord's true people as he studies this matter conclude that by the grace of God he will join the Mary class, and purchase spikenard very costly and lavish it upon the feet of the body of Christ--the Church--the true members. This will mean love, sympathy, kindness, gentleness, patience and assistance and comfort. It will mean large and growing development in all the fruits and graces of the Spirit, whose combined name is Love.

Dear readers, let us each remember that while it is impossible for us to do as Mary did in this lesson, it is the privilege of each to do still more important things for each other, for the brethren of Christ now in the world, the feet members of his body. Hers was a literal perfume and in time lost its virtue; but the little acts of kindnesses and helpfulness which we may render one to another will never lose their merit in the estimation of our Lord, and never lose their fragrance to all eternity in the estimation of each other. The little things of life, the little words, the little tokens, the kind looks, the little assistances by the way, these and not great things are our possibilities, our perfumes, the one for the other.

"WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET."

The washing of the feet in olden times in oriental lands was very necessary to the comfort, and hence to wash one another's feet would signify to comfort and refresh one another even in the most menial services. This is the essence of our Lord's lesson to us, that we should be glad for any opportunity for serving one another, for comforting and helping one another, however menial the service. Apply this now to the expression of our lesson. Mary washed our Lord's feet with perfume, and the

Mary class, the most loving and devoted class in the Church, are to help one another, to wash one another's feet; and they are to do so not in the rudest and clumsiest manner imaginable, but, inspired by love and devotion one to another, they are to wash one another's feet with the kindness and sympathy and love and appreciation symbolized by Mary's spikenard; and their comforting of one another is to be with that love and solicitation which was represented by Mary's using the very locks of her head for her Master's feet. We see some evidence that this love, this spikenard-Mary love and sympathy, is growing amongst the members of the Lord's body; that as they perceive the animosity of the world and the flesh and the Adversary against the Lord's anointed they are all the more devoted one to another, and all the more disposed to honor one another with care and love and sympathy, and to speak and act generously and kindly one toward another. We are glad of this--we know of no better evidence of growth in grace on the part of the consecrated. Let the good work go on until we shall have filled the house with the perfume of love, until the whole world shall take knowledge of how Christians love one another-- not in a narrow or partisan sense, but in the broad sense that Christ loved all who love the Father and all who sought to walk in the Father's ways.

LET US DO IT NOW.

If Mary had waited another week she might have used the perfume upon herself but not upon the Lord--within a week from the time of this incident our Lord was buried, the tomb was sealed, the Roman Guard stood before it and there would have been no opportunity even to have poured it upon his dead body. How much better that she improved the opportunity, that she showed the Lord her devotion while he was still her guest. The parallel is here: it will not be long until all the members of the body of Christ will have filled their share of the sufferings and have passed beyond the veil "changed."

Wisdom tells us that we should not delay in bringing our alabaster boxes of ointment and pouring their contents upon our dear ones of the body of Christ, the feet of Christ. No matter if they do not notice us, or think of us, or pour any upon us as members of the feet; let us do our part, let us be of the Mary class, let us pour out the sweet perfume upon others, and the house, the Church of the Lord, will be filled with the sweet odor, even though some disciples might mistakingly charge us with being extravagant with our love and with our devotion, not understanding that the Master by and by will say again, "Let her alone, she hath done what she could." Our Lord's estimate of this spikenard and anointing is that it is all that we can do--

nothing could be more or better. It indicates love, great love --and "love is the fulfilling of the law."

"Let us consider one another," said the Apostle--consider one another's weaknesses, consider one another's trials, consider one another's temptations, consider one another's efforts to war a good warfare against the world, the flesh and the Adversary--consider one another's troubles in the narrow way against opposition from within and without, and as we do so it will bring to our hearts sympathy, a sympathy which will take pleasure in pouring out the spikenard perfume, very costly, purest and best, upon all who are fellow-members of the one body.

Some one has spoken of the great "Society of Encouragers" who do so much to help encourage and uplift the footsore and weary in the pathway of life. It is not a great society so far as members are concerned, but it is a great society from the Lord's standpoint and from the standpoint of all who have been helped and encouraged by it. Spikenard Mary might have been said to have been a prominent member in this society of encouragers. We may well imagine that as our dear Redeemer was thinking of the severe trials, including the cross, of the week already begun, Mary's manifestation of love and devotion would come to him as a special encouragement and refreshment of spirit. So few seemed to understand him! even his disciples did not appreciate the situation. Here was one who at least loved him, had confidence in him. No doubt it gave him courage for the remaining days of his journey.

THE TRUTH TERSELY STATED.

Respecting the propriety of using present opportunities for the comfort and encouragement one of another, a writer has pointedly said:

"Don't keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up till your friends are dead. Fill their lives with gladness. Speak approving, cheering words while they can hear them...If my friends have alabaster boxes full of the fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them....I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. ...Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

Mrs. Preston's poem, "Ante Mortem," expresses the same thought thus:--

... "Had I but heard
One breath of applause, one cheering word--
One cry of 'Courage!' amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life--
How would it have nerved my soul to strain
Thro' the whirl of the coming surge again."

SACRIFICE OF SWEET ODOR.

The Apostle, speaking of the ministries of the Church one for another, says that ours is a sacrifice of sweet odor unto God, but again he adds that the Gospel referred to is of life unto life to some and of death unto death to others. That is to say, good deeds, kind words and efforts will be appreciated by those who are in the right attitude of heart to appreciate them, while on the contrary the same good deeds will arouse offence and constitute a bad odor to those who are in a wrong condition of heart. How often have we seen it so, that with our best endeavors to serve the feet of Christ some have been comforted and refreshed, others have been angered--to one the effort was a sweet odor, to the others it was an offensive odor, because of their wrong attitude of heart toward the Lord and toward the body of Christ--because, perhaps, of their ambitions or whatnot that were interfered with.

It was just so at Bethany: the sweet odors that filled the house, and the blessing and refreshment that came to Mary in connection with the ministration, had a very different effect upon Judas. He was angry; his selfishness hindered his appreciation of the honor done to the Lord; he could think only of himself and what

he had hoped to get out of the transaction, and how, so far as he was concerned, the whole matter was a waste. The sourness that came to his heart because of its wrong attitude is indicated by the testimony that he straightway went to the chief priests to bargain with them for the betrayal of Jesus. Let us, then, dear brethren, see to it that our hearts are in a loving attitude toward the Lord and not in a selfish attitude-- that we appreciate everything done in his name and for his body, and that we be not self-seeking. Otherwise the result will be with us the savor of death unto death, as it was with Judas.

This concludes our lesson. It was the next day probably that the Jews began to gather in considerable numbers to see Jesus and Lazarus, and to take counsel respecting the putting of them to death--"for the good of the cause." And, by the way, let us remember that the "good of the cause" has nearly always been the basis for every mean and despicable act against the Truth from first to last. Let us beware of such a sectarian spirit; let us see to it that our love for the Lord and all of his brethren is sincere, and not a personal and selfish one for ourselves or some denomination, otherwise we know not into what evils we might be led.

Z '14, 283 - 284; Reprint 5540

MARY'S SWEET PERFUME

--OCTOBER 4.--*MARK 14:1-11.*--

"She hath done what she could."--VERSE 8.

THE last five days of Jesus' ministry are full of interest. The incident especially marking our lesson occurred at the close of the Jewish Sabbath day just preceding our Lord's crucifixion. Jesus and His disciples had come to the Passover Feast, He telling them that He would there be crucified, but they thinking that He was speaking in some kind of figurative language. Indeed, at no time during Jesus' ministry did His crucifixion seem to be less likely than when it occurred. His preaching and the preaching of His disciples, first the Twelve and afterward the Seventy, had awakened considerable interest throughout all Jewry--especially in Galilee.

Great throngs of people were at Jerusalem to celebrate this Feast, which would last a week. Thousands of them had heard of Jesus; and many of them had been recipients of His mercy in the healing of their diseases. Just a short time before, a considerable number had discussed the propriety of proclaiming Jesus king. Indeed, on the very next day after the incident of this lesson, the multitude, some following and some preceding Him while He rode upon the ass, had acclaimed Him king. They had cried out, "Hosanna in

the highest to the Son of David, who cometh in the name of Jehovah!"

But the Master knew that the masses would be only as children in the hands of the great teachers of the time. He knew that there was a murderous hatred against Him amongst the chief priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees. True, it is written that they hated Him without a cause; that is to say, without a just cause (*John 15:25*); but they had cause enough to hate Him, from their own viewpoint.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS TEACHERS

Although the Jewish nation had lost its liberty long before and had no prospect of ever winning it back, nevertheless there had never been a time since the days of Solomon when their political prospects looked so favorable. The Roman Emperors had manifested their willingness to co-operate with these very priests, scribes and religious leaders. The Emperors wished merely to rule, and realized that they could exercise more influence through these religious leaders than in any other way.

Thus the great religious teachers felt themselves sponsors for the people. They perceived that their hold over the more ignorant Jews was being impaired by the teachings of Jesus. They felt so satisfied with themselves as claimed representatives of God and as intermediaries with the Roman government that they did not think it worth while to make inquiry respecting Jesus and His teachings. Indeed, from their viewpoint, everything was going along reasonably well. They could wish for nothing better than that their plans might not be interfered with.

Many of them had lost all faith in God and in a future life. Others, retaining faith in God and His promised Kingdom, thought that affiliation with the Roman Empire would be the best way of strengthening their nation and preparing it for the Messianic glories. From this viewpoint, Jesus was a disturber of the peace. He did not belong to their clique. His manner, no less than His teachings, reproved them and tended to break all their influence with the people.

The religious leaders had heard that Jesus was coming to the Feast. Our lesson tells us that they discussed how He could be wisely dealt with, killed, gotten rid of in any way. They seem to have been unanimous in believing that His destruction would be for the good of the Lord's Cause, as they misunderstood that Cause. Another Scripture tells us that Caiaphas, the chief priest, had declared that it was expedient that one man should perish rather than that the nation should perish. (*John 11:49-52*.) They fancied that the teachings of Jesus, if allowed to proceed, would certainly awaken the people to a faith in the Messianic Kingdom. They thought of Jesus as an imposter, but feared that His teachings would incite some kind of fanatical uprising. The religious leaders had murder in their hearts. It was merely a question of how they could accomplish the murder and deceive the people, so as not to provoke those who had begun to exercise faith in Jesus. Their conclusion was that the Feast time would be an unfavorable one; for He would be surrounded by the multitude, some of whom thought Him a great prophet, others of whom considered Him to be the Messiah. Such was their attitude of mind when Judas went to them privately, suggesting that he would be in touch with the movements of Jesus, and that for a certain amount of money he would inform them of the most suitable time for making Jesus a prisoner -- a time when the multitude would not be with Him. His plan was finally decided upon and carried out.

THE FEAST--THE ANOINTING

Jesus and His disciples were the honored guests of that Lazarus whom Jesus awakened after he had been dead three days. It was at the home of Simon the Leper,

who probably was dead. Jesus was the guest of honor, His disciples sharing with Him. Martha and Mary, with Lazarus, were hostesses. The supper had progressed when Mary entered with a vial of very expensive perfume, the contents of which she poured upon the head of Jesus and, according to another account, subsequently poured a portion of the same perfume upon His feet.

The house was filled with the perfume; Jesus was honored. Then came a voice of murmuring--"Why this waste?" St. John tells us that the leader of the murmurers was Judas, and that evidently several were influenced by his speech. Judas posed as the friend of the poor, intimating that his regrets were not selfish or personal, but that he thought what good might have been done to others.

The Apostles afterward learned that this speech was hypocritical. At the time Jesus understood the anger of Judas, which led him openly to insult one of the hostesses of the occasion. St. John tells us the anger of Judas was because he had failed to get this money himself. He was the treasurer of the little company of disciples; he carried the money-bag; and, as they afterward came to know, he was a thief, who privately was laying by for himself. (*John 12:6*.) And Judas is probably not the only person who has plead for the poor and at the same time sought to divert funds to himself.

THE MEASURE OF MARY'S DEVOTION

The statement of Judas that the perfume was worth three hundred pence is probably not an extreme valuation. Three hundred pence would be about six dollars. At a time when the silver penny, worth sixteen cents, represented a day's labor, three hundred pence would practically represent the labor of a year. Sixteen dollars per ounce, sometimes more, has been paid for the attar of rose; and history tells us of fabulous prices paid for perfumes in the past.

Today perfumes can be made and sold at trifling cost, in comparison with the past. And yet the ancients were passionately fond of perfumes; and the liberal use of them, as in the case before us, marked a deep respect, yea, reverence. Mary doubtless felt that her very highly esteemed friend Jesus, who had brought her brother back from the tomb, was none other than the Messiah, the Son and Representative of Jehovah God. The reverence which she felt for Jehovah she sought to express toward His highest Representative, Jesus.

Poor Mary must have felt quite crushed as she heard the harsh criticism. But Jesus came to her defense, saying, "Let her alone. Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work on Me. She hath done what she could; she hath anointed My body for its burial. The poor ye have always with you; and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but Me ye have not always."

Surely the Master's approval comforted Mary; and wherever the Gospel of the Lord has been preached, this story of her loving devotion, to the extent of considerable cost and probably considerable self-denial, has been told as a memorial of her, not merely to honor her, but especially to inspire and encourage others of God's people to the obtaining and exercising of a love which delights in service, yea, in costly sacrifice.

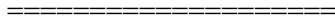
A SUGGESTION WORTH CONSIDERATION

A Boston printer, now dead, put on his business card the following helpful and practical suggestions:--"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead, but fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving and cheering words while their ears can hear them. The

kind things you say after they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, bestow now; and so brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

"If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them now in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered, while I need them and can enjoy them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, and a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial.

"Post-mortem kindness cannot cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin shed no fragrance backward over the weary way by which the loved ones have traveled."



Chapter 3: Five Days Before the Crucifixion:

Matthew 21: 1-16

21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,
21:2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose [them], and bring [them] unto me.
21:3 And if any [man] say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.
21:4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,
21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.
21:6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,
21:7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set [him] thereon.
21:8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed [them] in the way.
21:9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed [is] he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.
21:10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?
21:11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.
21:12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,
21:13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.
21:14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.
21:15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,
21:16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

Matthew 23:37-39

23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!
23:38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.
23:39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed [is] he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Psalms 8:2

8:2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

Luke 19:40

19:40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH!

--MATT. 21:1-17.--JAN. 13.--

"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

AFTER THE FEAST of our last lesson, the next morning, the first day of the week (our Sunday), our Lord early began his preparations for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem as a King. Altho he well knew that "his own" people would not receive him, but, as he had already testified to his disciples, that he would be put to death by the rulers, and intimated the night before that Mary's anointing was for his burial, it was nevertheless necessary as a part of the divine plan that he should formally offer himself as King to the Jews, and thus fulfil to that people God's promise that his favor should be "to the Jew first."

Our Lord had previously resisted the disposition of some of the people to take him by force and make him King, withdrawing from their midst, etc. (*John 6:15*); but now the time, the due time, having come, and that to the very hour, he deliberately planned his triumphal procession, instead of, as previously, hindering it. He sent some of the disciples for the ass and colt, manifesting his superhuman power by designating where and how the animals would be found. An ass was used rather than a horse, and tradition tells us that so all the kings of Israel were accustomed to ride to their coronation.

When the animal arrived the disciples and the whole multitude seemed to enter into the spirit of the arrangement; for it would appear that quite a number of those who came up from Jericho, and who had witnessed our Lord's power and teachings *en route* to the Holy City and the Passover, lodged at Bethany over the Sabbath, as he did. These, with the disciples, constituted quite a little band, who began to hail Jesus as the King, and to do him homage, as was customary with notables at that time, by spreading their outer garments in the way for his beast to tread upon; and by plucking grass and flowers, and branches of palm trees, and strewing these also in the way.

Jesus, in the honored position, riding at the head, was followed by this multitude on the road toward Jerusalem. Then another multitude from the city, having heard that the great Prophet and Teacher was at Bethany, came forth to see both him and Lazarus, and these, meeting the Lord and the shouting company behind him, turned about and became a vanguard, shouting like the rest, "Hosanna to the Son of David," which meant the King, one of the royal line. They probably were deterred from using the word "king" lest they should bring upon themselves charges of treason against King Herod, and

against the Roman empire, which sustained him in power.

It was a grand or a ludicrous triumphal entry into the city of the Great King, according to the standpoint from which it was viewed. From the standpoint of the disciples and the multitude, full of Messianic enthusiasm and hopes that the longed-for blessings upon Israel were about to be realized, and full of faith that this great Prophet, who had the power to raise the dead and heal the sick, could in his own time and way make himself and them invincible against all enemies, and amply fulfil all the glorious things foretold by the prophets,--for these it was a grand occasion, a real triumph. For, notwithstanding the fact that Jesus had previously told them repeatedly of his death, and had even reproved Peter for speaking to the contrary, nevertheless his disciples and others seem to have been unable to receive his words in their true meaning, and to have interpreted them as merely a part of his "dark sayings" which would undoubtedly later become luminous in some grand significance. This is attested by their language, even after his death and resurrection,-- "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."--*Luke 24:21*.

From the standpoint of Herod, Pilate, the chief priests and scribes, this triumphal procession was merely the parade of a fanatical leader and his ignorant and fanatical dupes. They saw in it evidently no more than this. King Herod and Pilate evidently had no fear that this despised Nazarene and his company would ever be able to organize and equip an army which would be of any force as against the order of things of which they were the heads. The religious leaders feared merely that the fanaticism might spread in some manner, and bring down upon them the wrath and further oppression of the secular powers, who might make them an excuse for further interference with the liberties of the Jews. Quite evidently none of these chief rulers believed in Jesus as the Messiah sent of God for the fulfilment of the gracious promises of their Scriptures. To this the apostles testify, saying, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;" "If they had known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."--*Acts 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8*.

That procession was viewed from still another standpoint by our Lord himself and by the invisible multitude of angels, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation.

These joined in the enthusiasm of the multitude, but from a totally different standpoint--realizing this triumph as merely a part of the divine plan, and merely a prelude to a greater triumph on our Lord's part through the completion of the sacrifice of himself and the attainment thus of "all power in heaven and in earth;" and as a foreshadowing, too, of his coming glory and his triumphal entry upon the Kingdom on his return from the far country (heaven) armed with a plenitude of power and authority, to put down sin and to bring all things into subjection to God; and to lift up out of the horrible pit of sin and disease and death all desirous of coming back into full harmony with the Father and the laws of his empire. This, the most glorious standpoint of view of that triumphal march, it is our privilege, by the grace of God, to enjoy; and we may well say in our Lord's words, "Blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears, for they hear."

Luke's account of this matter informs us that certain of the Pharisees who were with the multitude at the beginning, altho they could not object to anything which our Lord said or did, complained that he should permit his disciples and others of the multitude to hail him as a King, shouting Hosanna! (Salvation, Blessing, Praise!) Then it was that Jesus, knowing of the prophecy bearing upon this subject (*Zech. 9:9*), not only refused to rebuke the disciples and hinder their acclaims, but informed the Pharisees that since God himself, through the Prophet, had said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem," therefore there must be some shoutings; and that if the people had not arisen to that amount of enthusiasm to give such shoutings the very stones would have cried out, so that the prophecy should not be unfulfilled.

Tho the distance is quite short to Jerusalem from Bethphage, where the Lord mounted the ass, nevertheless the city was hidden from view by the Mount of Olives, and it was when the Lord had reached the top of Olivet, and the city of Jerusalem came suddenly into view, that he halted the procession and wept over the city; saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes...because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." (*Luke 19:41-44*.) From this language it is evident that our Lord did not consider the multitudes who were with him, as in any sense of the word, representing the city and nation; for altho these who were with him were shouting the very words, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah!" our Lord's language indicates that a time is yet to come when the heads of Israel, the chief ones representing the people, shall gladly acknowledge him as King of kings and Lord of lords, at his second advent; but in the meantime their failure to recognize the time of their visitation meant to

them a great loss of privilege; meant to them that their house must be left desolate, abandoned of the Lord during this Gospel age, during which he would gather from amongst the Gentiles a sufficient number to complete the elect number, in conjunction with the faithful ones of Israel, the remnant who had or would receive him.--See *Matt. 23:39*.

The objective point of this triumphal march was the Holy City, the capital city, the City of the Great King. But our Lord did not go to Herod's palace, to demand possession of it; nor to Pilate's palace, to demand recognition of him; but as the representative of Jehovah, as the Messiah, sent of God to be the Savior of Israel and the world, he went appropriately to the Father's house or palace,--to the Temple.

The scene in the Temple must have been a peculiar one. It was undoubtedly crowded with pilgrims from all parts of the civilized world, who at this season of the year came, to the number of hundreds of thousands, to worship the Lord and to observe the Passover, according to the Law. Probably many of them had heard something about Jesus of Nazareth, "mighty in word and deed." Many of them had been healed by him, or had friends who were thus blessed; and we can well imagine the commotion created by the multitudes coming with Jesus and crying, "Hosanna in the highest," etc. The Pharisees, scribes, and chief priests, who were used to dominate the people in religious matters, and especially in the Temple, altho filled with anger against Jesus, recognized themselves powerless to do him injury under the circumstances, for he was doing nothing contrary in any sense of the word to the Law, and this would be manifest to all. On the contrary, as tho to show that he was only doing what was in his power, our Lord began to exercise it as would be befitting a spiritual King--by reproving those who were violating the holy Temple and its precincts, driving out of it those who sold doves for offerings, and the money-changers who were reaping a profitable harvest from the necessities of the worshipers from a distance, whose money, not being Jewish, could not be accepted at the Temple, and which they must therefore have exchanged, at a loss--the profit of the moneychangers. We are not to understand that our Lord was interfering with the proper laws of the land nor of the Temple; --he was in every sense law-abiding. On the contrary, he was thoroughly authorized, as was any Jew, under the directions of the Law, to use so much force as was necessary in the maintenance of the sanctity of the Temple.

Blind and lame people came to our Lord in the Temple and were relieved of their infirmities, and then he taught the people--continuing the healing and the teaching for several days, returning at nights to

Bethany and coming the next morning to the Temple, but without any further demonstration, as a King, for that one demonstration had served the purpose intended. It had given to the officials of the city and nation the opportunity to formally accept him as king, but their contrary spirit is shown by their coming to him while the children in the Temple courts were crying "Hosanna!" requesting that he should put a stop to the matter; but our Lord answered them, quoting from the Scriptures, that this was in harmony with the divine plan: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." The worldly-wise did not appreciate this, and were blinded by self-interest; but little children, and especially those who in simplicity of heart and meekness became like little children, should be the instruments the Lord would use in shouting his praises.

Many of our Lord's parables and special teachings were uttered during those days in the Temple, between his triumphal entry and presentation on the tenth day of the month Nisan and his crucifixion on the fourteenth, as the Passover Lamb. (See *Exod. 12:3,6.*) These parables, etc., are recorded in *Matthew, chapters 23-25*, in *Mark, chapters 11-13*, and in *John, chapters 12-16*. Among other things he declared that the favor of God was, there and then, taken from fleshly Israel, saying,--

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" -- *Matt. 23:37-39.*

In considering the best lessons we at the present time can draw from these incidents, we suggest that their typical feature be not forgotten--that all shall remember that the events in the close of our Lord's ministry, and everything pertaining to the rejection and dissolution of the fleshly house of Israel, is typical and illustrative of the things which are to be expected to transpire in the present time, in the end of the Gospel age,--in the

rejection and dissolution of nominal Israel of today, "Babylon." As already shown in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 235, the time which corresponded to the Lord's formal offering of himself to fleshly Israel and his rejection was the year 1878. There nominal spiritual Israel was rejected, as previously the first or fleshly house had been rejected; yet in both cases all Israelites indeed receive him and receive corresponding blessings at his hand.

It is since this date (1878) we understand that our Lord has been in his spiritual Temple, the true Church, teaching in an *especial manner* all those who have an ear to hear, opening the blinded eyes and helping those who are spiritually lame to walk in his ways. It is since that time that all who belong to the Temple class of true worshipers are permitted to hear and see wonderful things out of the divine Word; and it is during this time also that the Lord is casting out of his Temple all those who make merchandise of the truth and who are not true worshipers--the money-changers and dove-sellers, etc.; and it is during this time that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the truth is being proclaimed so often to the offense of the scribes and Pharisees of today.

Shortly, the last members of the body of Christ, the feet, already being anointed for burial with the sweet odors of the truth, will complete their sacrifice shortly, the first resurrection will be complete and all the members of the body of Christ be glorified together with him;--and then, the sufferings of Christ being ended, the glory will speedily follow. But meantime before the glory is revealed, there will come a great time of trouble, symbolically a time of fire (trouble) and smoke (confusion) upon the world, and especially upon rejected "Babylon," and all who do not escape from her before the great tribulation comes, even as similar fiery vengeance came upon Israel after the flesh, and all who had not escaped from her.--*Luke 3:16,17; Matt. 13:38-43.*

=====

Z '05, 108 – 111; R3537

HOSANNA, IN THE HIGHEST!

--*JOHN 12:12-26.*--APRIL 23.--

Golden Text:--"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."--Matt. 21:9

THOUSANDS of people were gathering in Jerusalem, not only from every quarter of Palestine, but from Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Spain. It is estimated that at some of these Passover feasts a couple of millions assembled within and on the outskirts of Jerusalem. This was according to the divine commandment respecting the observance of the Passover feast. It is but reasonable

to suppose that the majority-- coming from a distance at considerable expense of time, etc.,--if not pious, were religiously inclined, although some doubtless regarded it merely as an excursion. The purely mercenary had little to expect, for there were a sufficient number so inclined already residing in Jerusalem, who would secure the best

opportunities for money-making in merchandising, money-changing, etc.

Our Lord and his disciples, as we noted in our last lesson, were amongst these pilgrims to the holy city, and these, we saw, took up their abode at Bethany. On the morning after the feast at which our Lord was anointed with the spikenard, he sent two of the apostles for an ass--a donkey. On its arrival garments were spread on it as a saddle, and our Lord, riding thereon, with the company of his disciples and the friends of the family and those who had witnessed the calling forth of Lazarus from the tomb, started as a little procession for the city. En route they were met by quite a company of people coming from Jerusalem to Bethany, because they had heard that the Lord was there, and because they desired to see the one of whom they had heard as the mighty miracle-worker who had even raised Lazarus from the tomb.

BRANCHES OF THE DATE PALM.

Our Lord's fame had spread abroad, and evidently divine providence had much to do with this entire arrangement, the meeting of the two companies, etc. Many of the people broke off branches of the date-palm trees growing in that vicinity, fernlike in shape and sometimes ten feet long. These were symbols of rejoicing and honor, symbols representing in this case that our Lord was the hero of the hour, whom they delighted to distinguish. At the meeting, there was a joyous uproar of praise and thankfulness to God; they were carried away with the enthusiasm of the moment. They spread the palm branches before the beast upon which our Lord sat, and those who had no palm branches spread their outer garments as an honor to the one who thus rode triumphantly, and picking up their palm branches and garments after our Lord's beast had walked over them they went ahead with these and strewed them afresh, thus in every way seeking to do honor to the one whom God had so signally recognized. In doing this the people were but expressing the pent-up feelings of their hearts.

For over sixteen centuries, since they had come into Canaan, they had been waiting for Messiah and the glorious fulfilment of the Oath-Bound Covenant made to Abraham, confirmed to Isaac and Jacob and their posterity. The majestic personality of our Lord fitted to their grandest conceptions of Immanuel, and had been attested by the wonderful miracles of which they had heard, the most prominent of which was evidenced before their eyes in the person of Lazarus and those who had borne testimony that they had seen him come forth from the tomb after he had been dead four days. Their hearts were right; they had not yet been spoiled by the doubts and fears of human wisdom, which in the worldly wise insisted upon seeing the money, and the soldiers,

and corresponding influence before it could believe in or accept any one as the Messiah, the Deliverer from the Roman yoke.

So it sometimes is with the Lord's people to-day. In the simplicity of our hearts we see precious promises in his Word and are ready to believe them; then the Adversary brings along objections, fears and doubts, and queries as to how, and the faith becomes diluted and loses its power to control our lives and conduct further. Our Lord, therefore, urges upon his followers that they should have the faith and obedience of little children and not be of the worldly wise. His Word assures us that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, and that God's wisdom and God's plan seem to the world to be foolishness. We must take our choice as between human wisdom and divine wisdom. Blessed are they who walk by faith and not by sight, and accept the wisdom of the divine Word. The end of the Lord's plan will fully justify their confidence, and work out abundantly more and better things than they ever dreamed.

HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

The word Hosanna is an acclaim of praise and confidence and expectancy and very closely resembles in thought the word hallelujah. Collecting the different exclamations of the people as given in the different Gospels we have these: "Hosanna," "Hosanna to the Son of David," "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," "Blessed is the King," "Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord," "Blessed is the Kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord," "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest," "Hosanna in the highest." Our Lord, of course, understood the whole situation--"He knew what was in man." He knew the depths of the sincerity behind these exclamations and acts of reverence; he knew, too, of the forces of evil and their power to make light appear darkness and darkness appear light.

He knew that he was to be the Passover Lamb, and that within five days another multitude, led by religious teachers, would be crying "Crucify him! Crucify him!" He knew that this shout now around him, gladly hailing him as the Messenger of the Covenant, would be disconcerted by the wolves--that they would be fearful of their own lives and interests as they would realize the power of the rulers and the mob under their control. He realized that with their little knowledge they would not dare to trust their own judgments as against those of their religious teachers; he knew that the Shepherd was about to be smitten and the sheep to be frightened and scattered, yet he said nothing; he allowed the divine program to be enacted; he was going as a sheep to the slaughter, but he opened not his mouth to appeal for aid, to defend himself, to explain the true situation. He could,

but he would not, deliver himself out of the hands of those who sought his life; for this very purpose he had come into the world--to die, to be sacrificed for sins.

"THE VERY STONES WOULD CRY OUT."

Some of the Pharisees had come along, perhaps through curiosity or perhaps to act as spies--perhaps some of those with whom Judas was conferring, and who were endeavoring to decide when and how the Lord should be taken, not realizing that their powers were limited until his hour was fully come. These spoke to the disciples, requesting them to call to the attention of Jesus the language of the multitude, and to suggest that it was not appropriate for him to permit them to thus proclaim him the Messiah and King. We are to remember that Jesus did not sound a trumpet before him, prominently announcing himself as the Messiah, as impostors were in the habit of doing. For three years he had preached the Gospel, gathering his disciples, performing his miracles, but had said nothing about his being the Messiah. He allowed his disciples to wonder and the public to wonder.

Some said he was a prophet, others that he was one of the prophets risen from the dead, others that he was Elias, but Jesus himself said nothing until a few months before the time of the lesson, when he broached the matter to his disciples by asking whom they considered him to be, and Simon Peter, speaking under a measure of inspiration or guidance, declared him to be the Messiah. From that time on Jesus began to explain to them that although he was the Messiah he must suffer, and they understood not. To them it seemed that, so far from his death being near, the very reverse was true. Some of the people were just getting awake to his greatness and power, others were just finding out that Messiah had really come--it could not be, they thought, that their Master would be crucified. They considered this one of his dark sayings.

But Jesus would not bid the multitude stop. On the contrary, he explained that their shouts were but a fulfilment of a prophecy made centuries before by **Zechariah (9:9)**--"Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass." Furthermore, by way of emphasizing the matter, by way of convincing his disciples that he was the very one mentioned by the prophet, he declared that if the multitude had not broken forth in a shout the very stones of the ground must have shouted, because thus God had caused it to be written aforetime in the prophecy, and not one jot or tittle of the divine declaration could fail. A little later on, when our Lord and his followers had reached the Temple, the shoutings of "Hosanna" were renewed; and in that connection it is particularly mentioned that the children

joined in the shouting, in accord with the words of the Scripture--"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained praise."

THE TIME OF THEIR VISITATION.

How remarkable is this scene!--the people of Israel waiting for Messiah for centuries, striving to be ready to be his peculiar people, to be associated with him in his Kingdom work, in the blessing of all the nations of the earth their religious teachers, with broad phylacteries and many outward manifestations of piety, zeal for the law and for the Sabbath, and claiming to be waiting for the Messiah, were all unprepared, not in the heart condition which alone would be able to recognize the Messiah-- "blind," leading the blind multitude who were too confidently trusting in them.

On the other hand the apostles, ignorant and unlearned men from Galilee, at a distance from the advantages of Judea, were the chief supporters and backers of Messiah. The crowd around him and favoring him, recognizing him, shouting his praises, were common people, many of them strangers to those parts, who had fewer advantages religiously than the people of Jerusalem. Amongst the number to give him praise were the little uninstructed children. How strange the scene appears, and yet it is no more strange than at present. Again we are in the days of the Son of man--again the doctors of the law, doctors of divinity and chief priests and scribes and learned professors and prominent church people, professing faithfulness to the Lord and praying continually, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," are blind to the fact of our Lord's second coming, to the fact that we are now living in the days of the Son of man."-- **Matt. 24:37-39.**

Only a few realize the situation and they are chiefly of the Nazareth and Galilean type, not highly esteemed amongst men and in religious circles--thought to be rather peculiar at very best. These alone to-day are hailing Emanuel, shouting his praises and laying at his feet their garments of praise and the palm branches of such victories as they can gain on behalf of the Truth in conflict with the world, the flesh and the devil.

"YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE."

The little procession was not long in passing from Bethany to the knoll of the Mount of Olives, which overlooks Jerusalem. Here the Master stopped and the multitude with him, their attention riveted upon the city and the King. They knew not the importance of the moment, they realized not that the great clock of the universe was striking, that a new dispensational change was taking place, that the favor which God had for centuries bestowed upon Israel as a nation was about to

pass from them, because they were not as a nation in heart readiness to receive the blessings and privileges proffered to them.

And it is not for us to mourn that they were not ready--rather it is for us to realize that the plan of God was not thwarted nor hindered by their unreadiness; and in God's providence, as he had foreknown and foretold, the fall of natural Israel from divine favor was about to open the way for so many of the Gentiles as were ready for the blessing, to come into divine favor, and become with the elect of natural Israel members of spiritual Israel. The Master saw all this, and as it was the marked-out divine plan he murmured not in any particular, and yet he wept as he beheld the city, as he thought of the privileges that were about to be removed from Israel as a nation, and how instead of blessings there would come upon them as a consequence of their rejection of their opportunities a "great time of trouble," awful trouble. He felt now as he expressed himself a few days later as they wept with him on the way to Calvary, "Weep not for me, weep for yourselves."

By way of identifying the transpiring events in the minds of his followers, even in this day, our Lord uttered audibly the words, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"--*Matt. 23:37-39*.

WHAT THE SENTENCE IMPLIED.

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.

"Ride on triumphantly, O Lord,
Pride and ambition at thy feet we lay.
Our eyes are opening and we hear thy Word;
We are thy followers, lead thou the way
To victory over sin and death and grave."

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S ANTITYPE.

The Scriptures clearly indicate that spiritual Israel, as the antitype of natural Israel, will similarly have a great testing in the end of this period or age; that a harvest

time for the gathering of the wheat is the consummation or closing of both the Jewish and the Gospel ages; that a terrible time of trouble, symbolized by fire upon the chaff of the Jewish age and by fire burning the tares in the end of the Gospel age, will prepare the way for the grander dispensation to follow the glorious reign of Messiah. The Scriptures declare that as our Lord proved a stone of stumbling to the great mass of nominal Israel after the flesh at his first advent, so he will be for a stone of stumbling to spiritual Israel, his second house, at his second advent.

We are, therefore, to expect that now in this harvest as in the harvest at the end of the Jewish age, the great mass of the Lord's professed people will be unready, and stumble, and go into the great time of trouble which will wind up this age. While sympathizing with the conditions, while weeping as our dear Redeemer wept over the natural house, while saying, Babylon is fallen, as he then declared, "Your house is left unto you desolate," we nevertheless learn to rejoice in the outworkings of the divine plan, realizing them to be the very embodiment of justice, wisdom, love. And the more deeply we inquire into the Word of the Lord, the more do we see that his love has still wonderful provisions in the future for many who are not found worthy to be of the very elect, the house of sons, but who may come into divine favor on a lower plan during the Millennial age.

Those who did receive the Lord at his first advent, those who were "Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile," not only were kept from stumbling over the Lord, but, instead of becoming a stumbling-stone to them, by the grace of God he became a stepping-stone to the higher and grander things of this Gospel age, to the great spiritual blessings which began at Pentecost. And so now, while the mass of nominal spiritual Israel, Christendom, are stumbling in the time of the second presence, we need have no doubt that all who are now spiritual Israelites indeed will be found of the Lord and gathered into his garner; and that while the masses of professors will stumble, all of this class will find the Lord and the present Truth a stepping-stone to the still grander and still higher new dispensation to which we will be ushered in, not by another Pentecost, but by the glorious change of the first resurrection, which shall make us like our Lord, spirit beings, partakers of the divine nature.

This class, prepared for this blessing and exaltation, will be found--much like the class at the first advent-- to contain not many great, not many wise, not many learned, but Israelites indeed, sincere lovers of the Truth, willing at heart at least to lay down their lives for the Lord and for the brethren. To them also come the Lord's comforting words, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see;

and your ears, for they hear." Even in the present time they have a blessing, before the change.

THE JEWS SOUGHT SIGNS, THE GREEKS WISDOM.

John's account does not give all the details respecting the entry into the Temple, but, passing over some of these, enumerates an incident that occurred probably a day or two afterward while our Lord was preaching in the Temple. Certain Greeks, realizing that the Lord was not appreciated by his hearers, apparently thought to invite him to go with them to their homes, not realizing the plan of God in respect to his great sacrifice. They requested an audience with Jesus, and, naturally enough, went to Philip and Andrew, whose names of Greek origin implied that they had a knowledge of the Greek language. These made known the matter to Jesus, who, however, merely used the incident for an opportunity to impress still further the lesson of the hour, that the time had come for him to be glorified-- not glorified in the way that his disciples and friends had expected and hoped, but glorified in the higher sense which our Lord realized. He knew that his hour was approaching in which he was to be crucified, and that his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, was the condition upon which his high exaltation in the divine plan was made to hinge. His heart, fully consecrated, was merely waiting for the opportunity to finish the work which the Father had given him to do.

"IF A GRAIN OF WHEAT DIE."

Our Lord answered in a dark saying, in a parable, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." No wonder that the apostles and the Jews were mystified by such statements of the truth. Indeed we know from other Scriptures that the majority of our Lord's teachings were not expected nor intended to be understood until after Pentecost--after the holy Spirit of adoption would enlighten their understandings. Now, by reason of this enlightenment, we are privileged to appreciate the rich depths of our Lord's statement.

We see that if Jesus had kept his life, had not sacrificed it, he might indeed have maintained it forever, but he would not in that event have been privileged to bestow life upon the Church and the world. His death, the just for the unjust, applied to his believing disciples, justified them to life, "through faith in his blood." His death thus brings forth choice fruit in his Church, his Bride, his Members. And, indirectly, the fruitage will be still larger, for his disciples, justified through faith in his blood, are invited and privileged to lay down their lives with his, to become dead with him. The results or fruitage in their case as members of his body means a

still larger crop in the age to come. Otherwise stated, our Lord as the one grain brings forth much fruit, an hundred and forty and four thousand, besides the "great company" whose number is known to no man. And through the hundred and forty and four thousand, his representatives, his members, the result will ultimately be a still larger fruitage, when all the families of the earth shall have the fullest opportunity of reconciliation to the Father and of life everlasting upon the divine conditions.

TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP.

Stating matters far beyond the comprehension of his hearers, our Lord proceeded to mark out the course of his immediate followers in language which they would understand after the begetting of the Spirit, after Pentecost, saying, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." That is to say, if we esteem highly our present existence, under present imperfect conditions, we will not be willing to lay down our lives in the Lord's service in the hope of future life, seen only by the eye of faith.

We must love less the present life under present imperfect conditions in order to appreciate more the eternal life under better conditions. Whoever is satisfied

with the sinful and imperfect condition in the present life is in no state of mind to become the Lord's disciple. Being satisfied with present conditions, he will be unwilling to sacrifice them for the really better ones which the Lord commends. We have no reason to think that the Lord's words apply beyond this Gospel age--in the Millennial age things will be greatly transformed, reorganized. The Lord's language limits the matter saying, "in this world,"--that is, this *kosmos* or order of things.

Still continuing to explain 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.

Z '06, 281 - 184; R3850

COMING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

--MATT. 21:1-17.--SEPTEMBER 9.--

Golden Text:--"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

IN our last lesson Jesus and his disciples, with others, were on the way to Jerusalem for the celebration of the Passover. They had already passed through Jericho. En route Jesus gave the parable of the talents; and Bethany, the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, was reached Friday night, just a week before his crucifixion. He rested with his friends on the Sabbath, partook of the feast prepared in his honor that evening, received the anointing of the costly spikenard from Mary, and next morning, the first day of the week, continued his journey to Jerusalem. Throughout the week, however, he made Bethany his home, going daily to the city, returning at night. Bethany was about two miles distant from the Temple. Here the present lesson begins.

With the Lord were a considerable number of people who had come up to Jerusalem in his company, and some who had come out from Jerusalem to Bethany to see him, because they had heard that the Prophet of

Nazareth who had raised Lazarus from the dead was at the home of the latter. When this multitude reached Bethphage, a little village on the Mount of Olives, Jesus stopped and sent two of his disciples to another village close by to bring to him an ass and her foal. The owner of the animals may have been acquainted with Jesus, and if so would also have been acquainted with his disciples. At all events his request was honored, and Mark tells us, according to the revised version, that they promised that Jesus would send back the colt to the owner. Evidently it was unusual for our Lord to ride, and, although he came and went a longer distance every morning and evening throughout the week, this was the only occasion we have any knowledge of his riding. Evidently the reason for riding at this time was not weariness. He was about to present himself to the people after the manner of their kings of the past, who we are told rode in triumph on white asses.

THE OBJECT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RIDE

A prominent writer on this lesson seems to present a very wrong view of our Lord's course and program, saying: "Jesus now for three days made his final attempts to persuade the Jewish nation to accept him as the Messiah and thus save themselves from destruction, and become a great power for bringing in the Kingdom of heaven among men. He uses every possible means, in a great variety of ways, for accomplishing his purpose. He presents himself to them as a king. He shows his royal authority by cleansing the temple, his Father's house. He performs royal deeds of power and of mercy in healing the sick. He argues, he discourses, he pleads, he teaches, he answers objections, he threatens, he warns."

To the very contrary of all this, we find that our Lord here studiously avoided arousing the people, lest they should "take him by force to make him a king." (*John 6:15*.) He taught the people in parables and dark sayings, which he did not explain except privately to his disciples, saying, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God: but unto them that are without all these things are spoken in parables: that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear and not understand." (*Mark 4:11,12*.) Just a few days before this our Lord had expressly told his disciples that he would be set at naught by the rulers of the nation and would be crucified and rise again the third day. They had at least partially understood this matter, for they endeavored to dissuade him from such a view, and he had explained to them that his Kingdom was to be a heavenly one, "in the regeneration" times, when they should sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Our Lord knew that he would be rejected, and before he entered the city, viewing it, he wept over it and said, "Your house is left unto you desolate." He evidently had not the slightest intention of alluring the people to his support and for the establishment of an earthly Kingdom. We cannot doubt what a power he would have had if he had but spoken in defense of his own position. Even when he was accused before Pilate, the Roman governor marvelled that he offered no defense. All this was in harmony with the prophecy, which declared, "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

Jesus sought to influence only those Jews who were "Israelites indeed," in whom there was no guile; and he understood the Father's plan to be that his message, as directed under the leadings of providence, would attract this class --and he did not wish for others. It was not the Father's will, as he declared. The remainder of that nation, aside from the "Israelites indeed," the holy ones,

according to the divine plan and arrangement, would reject our Lord, crucify him and be blinded for more than eighteen centuries until, at the time of his second advent, their eyes of understanding would be opened and they would "look upon him whom they have pierced and mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his firstborn." (*Zech. 12:10*.) Meantime the Lord's favor during this Gospel age, as intended, would pass throughout the world, making disciples of the pure in heart, a zealous class of various nations, peoples, kindreds, tongues, for the purpose of selecting joint-heirs in the heavenly Kingdom, which was not intended to be established as an earthly Kingdom nor a heavenly one until God's due time--at the second coming of our Lord.

THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY

Two prophecies combine in the testimony here recorded: "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold your King cometh unto thee, meek and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Compare *Isa. 62:11*; *Zech. 9:9*.) It was in fulfilment of the prediction that Jesus rode upon the ass. The Jews were familiar with this prophecy, and for long centuries had been waiting for Messiah to fulfil it. It was necessary, according to the divine program, that our Lord should literally, actually, do what the prophets had foretold, that Israel might be without excuse in their rejection of him: so that in the future, when their blindness shall be turned away, when the eyes of their understanding shall be opened, when they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and mourn for their rejection of him, they will find themselves without excuse, they will realize that the Lord had performed unto them as his covenant people all his good promises, and that the fault of their rejection was entirely of themselves; that they were not in the condition of heart to receive their King; that whereas he was meek and lowly of heart they were proud and boastful; whereas he was pure and unselfish, they were impure and self-seeking and not fit for the Kingdom. In a word, God did for natural Israel everything that he had purposed and promised, and certified thereby that the fault was entirely theirs.

The multitudes accompanying the Lord seemed to catch the spirit of the occasion, and while they shouted "Hosanna to the son of David," the Messiah, they made him a royal pathway for his beast, some spreading their garments, others getting branches of trees. It had been a custom amongst various peoples for long centuries to thus treat their honored rulers. In countries where flowers abounded these were used, in others the branches of trees, and in some instances the garments of their admirers and loyal subjects were thus used. We cannot suppose that all of this multitude were saints,

though doubtless many of them outside of the apostles were sympathizers with Jesus. That it was not the apostles themselves who instigated and carried on this proceeding is shown by the fact, narrated by another evangelist, that certain Scribes and Pharisees in the multitude came to the disciples and suggested that they call the attention of the Lord to the matter, pointing out to him the impropriety of such proceedings.

The modesty of our Lord in respect to his Messiahship is noteworthy. Not on a single occasion we know of did he announce himself as Messiah. His highest claim at any time was that he was the Son of God, a claim and title permissible to any of his true disciples throughout the Gospel age since Pentecost. In every instance his honor as Messiah was mentioned by others and simply not disputed by the Lord. For instance, on the first occasion when Jesus inquired of his disciples, "Whom say men that I am?" and later, "Whom say ye that I am?" when Peter, speaking for them, replied, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God," Jesus indicated his assent by the words, "Blessed art thou, Simon-Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Now it was the multitude that heralded him the son of David, the Messiah, and he merely held his peace--only when others objected did he declare that the shouting was necessary to the fulfilment of the prophecy which declared that there should be a shout, saying, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." The third place where his Messiahship was referred to was before Pilate, who asked him, "Art thou a king then?" He answered, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

"HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST"

Had this procession and the shoutings of kingly honor to our Savior any meaning outside of being a testimony to the Jewish nation--a presentation to them of their King--to be accepted or rejected? They had no other meaning at the time, but indirectly they have a lesson for us spiritual Israelites at the end of this age; because we find that the divine arrangement is such that the history of natural Israel, from the death of Jacob down to this event, was typical of spiritual Israel's experiences from the death of Jesus down to his coming in glory, presenting himself to his people. The declaration of the prophets is that he must offer himself to "both the houses of Israel"--the fleshly house and the spiritual house. As in the fleshly house there were true and untrue Israelites, so also in the spiritual house of this Gospel age, "Christendom," there are both true and untrue Israelites, professedly waiting for Messiah and his Kingdom.

Natural Israel waited 1845 years for the Lord to come as their King, to establish righteousness in the earth, and to use them as his channel for blessing to all mankind according to the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant. When Messiah came they were unready to receive him and unfit to be his co-laborers--except the few Israelites indeed whom he gathered out of that nation and constituted the nucleus of the new nation. When the Jewish nation, natural Israel, were cast off, rejected, the Lord began the selection of spiritual Israel out of all the nations as he had foreseen and foretold. Nominal spiritual Israel waited a similar period of time, 1845 years, from the death of Jesus to the time when he was due to present himself as King.

A host of Scriptures unite in the testimony that our Redeemer presented himself to spiritual Israel at the date corresponding to this triumphal entry into Jerusalem and presentation to natural Israel, viz., in 1878 A.D. (for prophetic testimony on the subject see MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vols. II. and III.) At that date also we believe nominal spiritual Israel --Churchianity, "Babylon"--was rejected after the same manner that the Jewish nation was rejected. True, Christendom does not realize this rejection,--neither did natural Israel realize its rejection and that its house was left desolate, left to go to destruction. As the 37 years following our Lord's rejection of natural Israel brought them to the utter destruction of their city and polity, so we anticipate that 37 years from 1878 will bring "Christendom" to its destruction in the great time of trouble predicted in the prophecy.

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

We are still in the time when spiritual Israelites are deciding for or against Messiah--accepting him as their present Lord and King, or rejecting him; shouting in their hearts "Hosanna to the son of David, who cometh in the name of the Lord," or, on the other hand, amongst those who become embittered as they hear the message. Those who receive him will surely have an antitype of the blessed experiences which came to the Lord's true people at Pentecost. The antitype will be immensely greater and grander than the type, nothing short of full change from the corruptible to incorruptible conditions in the First Resurrection. The others, unready of heart to receive the Lord and the blessings, will have their share in the great time of trouble with which this age will terminate and which will prepare mankind in general for the glorious Millennial reign of righteousness promptly to be ushered in.

As soon as Jesus had sentenced the Jewish nation to destruction saying, "Your house is left unto you desolate: ye shall see me no more until that day when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the

Lord," he ceased all efforts in connection with that nation--their trial was ended as a nation, but still he sought the individuals who were of the proper condition of heart. He proceeded to the Temple and cleansed it of its merchants and money changers, driving them out with a scourge of cords. He was backed by the authority which belonged to any Jew in any station of life, but was additionally backed by his own kingly presence and the multitude which thronged about him, which would have been ready to support him with physical force: all this of course aside from his heavenly power.

THE ANTITYPICAL TEMPLE CLEANSING

To our understanding the chief force of this feature was its typical one--illustrative of a great truth now applicable to spiritual Israel. The Temple built by Herod was only the type. The true Temple is the Church of the living God. This Church Temple may be considered from two standpoints: (1) The Church of glory in the future, of which the Lord's faithful ones of the present time are the living stones, now being chiseled, prepared. (2) The Church in its present condition of humiliation, imperfection, more properly the tabernacle in which the Lord dwells. As there were strict regulations governing the worship and worshipers in the types, so there are positive regulations in God's Word for those who constitute the priests and Levites doing the services of the tabernacle in the present time, preparatory to the establishment of the glorious Temple of the future.

The Scriptures clearly indicate that in the end of this Gospel age God purposes a cleansing of his sanctuary, his temple--Christendom. There will be nothing in or connected with the Temple in glory that will need to be cleansed, nothing impure, nothing that defileth will enter therein; but the Temple, the Church of the present time, stipulated to be composed merely, solely, of the consecrated believers, has become a mixed multitude, so that under the name of Christian and Church are many persons and parties thoroughly unchristian, connected with the things of this world on a purely selfish basis. The Lord proposes a cleansing of this sanctuary, as testified through the Prophet Daniel--unto 2300 days [years], then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. That was merely a typical cleansing which our Lord accomplished in the typical Temple; the antitypical cleansing is the one of real importance and we are living now in this time of cleansing. (See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. III., Chap. IV.)

The type gives us a suggestion respecting the character of the cleansing, that it mainly affects those who make merchandise of holy things--those who are associated with the Lord's work for selfish reasons, because "their bread is buttered on that side," because they can have more honor of men, more of the advantages and

comforts of life, and better business prospects by reason of their identification with Churchianity. All of this class must be driven out: the Lord himself will see to the work. The Lord's house is not to be a house of merchandise. The Lord seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, and not those who seek the loaves and fishes or any earthly advantage. He will therefore present the truth in such a form that it will be a blessing to the proper class, and separate all of the improper class by a measure of odium in connection with the King and his faithful. At the present time the Lord, the Truth, with a whip of small cords, is injurious only to those who are in the Temple for purposes of merchandise, and not injurious to others. There are money changers today in the nominal Temple who are robbing the people by accepting salaries for that which is not food, who, while professing to teach the way of the Lord and receiving honor of men and other emoluments, are really misrepresenting the Lord and his Truth. All such will be separated from the true Temple class, all such will be angry with the Master and his followers, as were the merchants and money-changers in the typical Temple, and they will have their sympathizers also, as they did.

THE TEMPLE A DEN OF THIEVES

Thieving, robbery, is usually done secretly, deceptively. The thief usually represents himself as the very reverse. He poses as an honorable man; but slyly, under cover, he secures to himself that which is not properly his. Is not this the case with very many professedly Christian ministers and teachers and elders in various quarters of Churchianity? Are there not many who pose as ministers of the cross of Christ and of the Word of God who deny the Word of God and to whom the cross of Christ is foolishness? Of this class are those who tell us that they are Evolutionists; that instead of man falling from God's likeness and needing to be redeemed by the blood of the cross and needing the second coming of the Lord to restore him, the very reverse is their conception of truth, viz., that if man has fallen at all he has fallen upward, that he has no need to be redeemed, and that to look for the second coming of the Lord for the salvation of the world is foolishness. Are not these men receiving money under false pretenses? and is not such a system of thievery the very worst kind in the world? Is not this an open robbery? Do they not rob God in that they detract from his honor? and do they not rob the people in that they take from them money and honors, etc., while deceiving them, selling them that which is not bread, which satisfieth not?

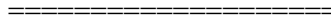
The Father's house, his Church, should be composed solely of those who worship him in spirit and in truth. It is meet, it is proper, that all others should be cast out,

and the Lord will see to this now because the due time for it has come. The sanctuary shall be cleansed; then in due time the glory of the Lord will fill it--the Royal Priesthood will be changed and become the Temple of glory, honor, dominion and power, from which will proceed the blessing of the world of mankind.

The people in general were thoroughly aroused by the triumphal entry and then the scourging of the money-changers. To the inquiry, Who is this? came the answer, "This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." The news spread, and the poor and the lame of the city began to flock to the temple. Doubtless they had heard before about this great Prophet, and many of them found this their opportunity for receiving a blessing at his hands. So it will be in the future, when the spiritual Temple will have been fully cleansed, and the Lord of the Temple will be in it in power and great glory, the healing and blessing of all the families of the earth will be in order and will be accomplished--all who will may then be blessed.

The shoutings of the multitude on the way had doubtless ceased, yet the children in the Temple had apparently taken it up, and doubtless without any

particular meaning were singing over and over, "Hosanna, hosanna, to the son of David." This illustrated how by and by the praises of the Lord shall fill his Temple, and the Pharisees who heard the children were annoyed by it. We may presume that they endeavored to stop them unsuccessfully, and then appealed to the Master, as the one whose authority would be recognized, to rebuke them; but he answered them this was fulfilling prophecy again, as it is written, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." What the more highly favored and intelligent of natural Israel did not appreciate and failed to proffer the Lord caused to be accomplished even at the mouths of babes. Indeed, everywhere we find that earthly wisdom is apt to misinterpret divine purposes. Very frequently, therefore, the Lord makes use of the weak, the poor, the ignorant, instead. Let us, dear brethren, whatever our opportunities and talents, seek to be as little children, not guided by worldly wisdom merely but "taught of God," that we may now in the proper form herald our Master the Messiah, and in every sense of the word cooperate with him in his work and be accounted worthy as faithful ones to be associated also in the glory of the Kingdom.



Chapter 4: Four Days Before the Crucifixion

Matthew 21:17-32

21:17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

21:18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

21:19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

21:20 And when the disciples saw [it], they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

21:21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this [which is done] to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

21:23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

21:24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

21:25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

21:26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

21:27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

21:28 But what think ye? A [certain] man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

21:29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

21:30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I [go], sir: and went not.

21:31 Whether of them twain did the will of [his] father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

21:32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen [it], repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Mark 11:12-10

11:12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

11:13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not [yet].

11:14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard [it].

11:15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

11:16 And would not suffer that any man should carry [any] vessel through the temple.

11:17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard [it], and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

11:19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

John 2:13-22

2:13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

2:14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

2:15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

2:16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

2:17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

2:18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

2:20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

2:21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

2:22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

BARREN FIG TREE--DEFILED TEMPLE

--AUGUST 9.--MARK 11:12-25.--

"By their fruits ye shall know them."--MATTHEW 7:20.

THE triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was a past incident. After spending a portion of the day in the Holy City, Jesus returned to Bethany, which is merely a suburb. The next morning, going again to the city, Jesus noted a fig tree by the wayside, bearing plenty of leaves. He approached it, seeking figs, but found none. The good show of leaves was deceptive. Then Jesus put a ban, a curse, a blight, upon the tree, declaring that it should not bear fruit forever, or to a completion. What did this mean? Surely it was not an intimation that the followers of Jesus should place a curse upon every unfruitful tree or unfruitful field! There must have been some deeper lesson in it, not apparent on the surface.

Bible students believe that they now see the deeper significance of this carefully noted incident. They believe that that fig tree was used as a type, or picture, of the Jewish nation; and that that blight upon the tree because of its unfruitfulness corresponded exactly to the blight pronounced the day before upon the Jewish nation because of its unfruitfulness.

On the day previous Jesus had said to the Jewish nation, "Ye shall see Me no more until that Day." So He declared of this tree that it should be blighted to the end of the *aion*, or Age. Again, when speaking to His disciples respecting the end of this Age, Jesus declared, "When ye shall see the fig tree putting forth leaves, then know that summer is nigh"--that the winter time, the blight time of the nation of Israel and of the world, is at an end. In other words, one of the signs of a New Dispensation would be the sprouting, or indications of life, hope, promise, amongst the Jews.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ZIONISM

These same Bible students are now pointing to the revival of hope amongst the Jewish people, as especially manifested by Zionism. It is being pointed out that this return of hope and faith to the Jews respecting their land and the Divine promises of the past is opportune--exactly in line with prophecy. They point to *Isaiah 40*th chapter as now in process of fulfilment: "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

These Bible students are telling that Ezekiel's prophecy of the valley of dry bones which came together, were clothed with flesh and finally received the breath of life, is an allegory respecting the Jews. They

hold that it does not refer to a literal resurrection, but to the revival of Israel's hopes in the Divine promises. This is in harmony with the Prophet's declaration, "These bones are the whole House of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off from our parts."--*Ezekiel 37:11*.

The same Bible students declare that St. Paul teaches that the Jewish nation was typically represented by Ishmael, the son of Hagar. (*Galatians 4:22-31*.) As Hagar and her son were outcast for a time only, so the Law Covenant and the Jews have been cut off from Divine favor only for a time. Ishmael had almost fainted for thirst in the wilderness, and then was revived by the angel of the Lord, who pointed out a spring of water. This also is typical. Jewish hopes of God's favor had almost died. Zionism is the well-spring which is reviving them--rescuing them from death as a people. Under Messiah's Kingdom, soon to be established on the spirit plane, the Jews will receive a great blessing--on the earthly plane.

We know of no other interpretation which seems to fit the facts of this lesson or to show a reason why Jesus should manifest displeasure against an inanimate object, which had no personal responsibility or accountability.

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

After the fig tree incident, Jesus and His disciples proceeded to Jerusalem and went directly to the Temple. There, contrary to anything that He had previously done, Jesus assumed authority, and began to cast out the traders without ceremony, overturning the tables of the money-changers and the stalls where doves were sold to people who desired to offer them in sacrifice at the Temple. Another account of the same incident tells us that in this cleansing of the Temple Jesus used a scourge of small cords, and drove forth the traders. Today's lesson tells us that He would not permit even the carrying of vessels through the Temple. All this is of double significance:

- (1) Primarily, it had to do with that time;
- (2) Secondly, it was typical of a cleansing of the antitypical Temple due, we believe, in this our day.

According to the legal usages of our day, it would be quite improper for any one to enter any church edifice or temple in order to interfere with any of the rights of conscience or the procedure sanctioned by the congregation owning the edifice. If wrong were being done and he wished to rectify it, it would be his duty either to go and swear out a warrant before a magistrate or to call a policeman and have him take note of the

infraction of the law and correct matters. But under the Jewish Law it was different. Every Jew was privileged to enforce the Divine Law in respect to blasphemy or any sacrilege. Parents were even required by the Law to stone their own children to death for blasphemy.

Jesus therefore did only what any Jew would have a right to do, in upsetting the trading apparatus of those who were defiling the Temple of the Lord, doing violence to its sanctity. It will be noticed that as much as their Scribes and Pharisees desired to find some occasion against Jesus, they made no objection to the high-handed procedure here described. Jesus was within His rights, He was championing the cause, the honor, of God and His Temple, as He had a perfect right to do.

"MADE IT A DEN OF THIEVES"

In the declaration, "Ye have made it a den of thieves," Jesus intimated that responsibility for the prevailing condition of things rested upon those in authority--the Scribes and the Pharisees. For graft and other considerations they had permitted the especially consecrated House of God to become a place of merchandise. Moreover, it is claimed by some that the Temple was frequently used as a place for barter on a larger scale. Here money-sharks found opportunity for meeting people in distress, who came to the Temple for prayer. Such were referred to by Jesus as those who robbed widows, while for pretense they made long prayers. In other words, Jesus judged that some in His day made a cloak, or pretense, of their religion in order to take advantage and to reap pecuniary benefit. Hence the Temple had become "a den of thieves."

In olden times, as with many at present, there was a literalness attached to the word theft which only partly covered its meaning. The loan-sharks infested the Temple, pretended sympathy for those in trouble, and loaned money on exacting terms which finally devoured the property of the widow and the orphan in a legal manner. We fear that the same is true today--that religion is still used as a cloak to cover selfishness. People who do not think of literally committing theft, robbery, often succumb to the arguments of warped consciences. The Master, who was especially indignant at such misuse of the House of God of old, holds the same sentiments today. It is in vain that any claim to be His followers, His disciples, His friends, members of the true Church of Christ, who at the same time use religion hypocritically.

"THE HOUSE OF PRAYER"

While Jesus often went into the mountain to pray, or prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, while Pharisees sometimes prayed on the street corners, and while St. Peter went to the housetop to pray, nevertheless the Temple was recognized by all the Jews as especially a House of prayer. Thus we read that St. Peter and St. John

went up to the Temple to pray. (*Acts 3:1*.) It was the one place of all others in the world where the soul might feel that it could draw especially near to God. In the Most Holy was the Mercy Seat, upon which rested the Shekinah light, representing Divine Presence.

The nearer to that Most Holy any one was able to draw, the more was he understood to be in communion with God. Thus the priests alone might enter the Holy and the Most Holy. The others of the nation of Israel were not permitted to come nearer than the Court. Of these courts there were three--first, the one for the Jews; second, the one for Jewish women; and third, an outer Court, where believing Gentiles might worship the true God, but separated by "a middle wall of partition," as St. Paul declares. (*Ephesians 2:14*.) These Courts represented differing degrees of approach to God's favor. In the antitype, which is not yet complete, Christ and His Church will be the Temple proper; and all mankind desiring to approach God will approach through The Christ, the Temple of God. And the nearer they come, the greater will be their blessing.

St. Peter and St. Paul both tell us of this antitypical Temple: "Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit?" (*1 Corinthians 6:19*.) "The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are." (*1 Corinthians 3:17*.) The Church, making increase for years in the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, "groweth unto a holy Temple of the Lord." (*Ephesians 2:21*.) "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual House." (*1 Peter 2:5*.) "Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Holy Spirit"--"built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone."--*Ephesians 2:20-22*.

This antitypical Temple may be viewed from four different standpoints. In harmony with the last text quoted, it is still under construction. 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.

"YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE"

But now let us take a still different view of the subject--not contradictory to the foregoing, but confirmatory. 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.

Now, as the New Creature dwells in this mortal body, it is styled a tabernacle rather than a temple, because through sin and degradation it is impaired, and not glorious. Besides, the word tabernacle signifies that which is temporary, not permanent, not eternal. Our Heavenly house, our spiritual body, will be the Temple, but none can enter that perfect Temple condition except by a share in the First Resurrection, as Jesus said: "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."--*Revelation 20:6*.

None can know the character of the heart, whether it be a new heart or merely that of the natural man or woman who has learned politeness, morality, etc. The only way in which we are permitted to judge each other is by the outward fruitage. If the Spirit of the Lord dwell within, the fruitage must be good, helpful to others. That human being must be a blessing in his home, in his community, even as Jesus was, whether his character, his goodness, be acknowledged by others in general or not. The fruits of these people of God are the fruits of holiness, meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, self-sacrifice in the interest of others and especially in the service of God and His Truth.

Z '16, 204 – 205; R5920

LESSON OF THE BLIGHTED FIG TREE

"Have faith in God."--Mark 11:22.

AS JESUS and His Apostles passed along the road from Bethany to Jerusalem preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, they had seen, en route, a fig tree. Our Lord, being hungry, went to the tree, seeking fruit thereon; for the time of figs was not yet past. But He found that the tree was barren. Then He pronounced a curse, a blight, upon the tree. The next day as they passed by, Jesus' disciples noticed that the fig tree had withered from the roots. Then Peter said, "Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away!" Jesus answered, "Have faith in God." (*Mark 11:13,14,20-22*.) Then He called their attention to the fact that it was not merely Himself who had blighted the tree, but that the Heavenly Father was to be recognized as behind Him in this. He ascribed always the honor to the Father. He was merely the Finger of God. "The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."--*John 5:36; 14:10*.

REAL OBJECT OF JESUS' MIRACULOUS WORKS

Some of the people of that time, as now, had malignant power; and Jesus' act might have been attributed to that source. So He would direct the minds of His disciples to the things that He did as being always of God--thus differentiating His power from that of Satan. Some might wonder that God would take notice of a tree because it was not bearing fruit. But Jesus was not an ordinary person. His course was not an example for us to go along the street and, seeing an unfruitful tree, say, "Cursed be this tree; it shall not bear any more fruit forever!" Should we adopt this course, we might be finding fault with trees and with everything else. But our Lord was especially sent of God. He was accustomed to do good as He went about. He healed the people and taught them, giving them forceful object lessons.

It was necessary that the disciples of Jesus be thoroughly convinced that He was sent of God before they could have developed in them the needful faith. They must continue this faith, consecrating their hearts and lives to God, before they would be ready for the Pentecostal blessing. Hence many of our Lord's works

were of an outward, visible kind, intended for the enlightenment of His followers, for the establishment of His Messiahship, and for the manifestation of His future work for the world. Of His conversion of the water into wine, it is written, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His [coming] glory; and His disciples believed on Him."--**John 2:11**.

St. Paul points out that the natural man cannot see the deep things of God because they are spiritually discerned. (**1 Corinthians 2:14**.) Hence there was a necessity for teaching of this outward, material kind to Jesus' disciples; for they were but natural men. Although they recognized Him as the Messiah, they did not realize this clearly at first. Jesus asked them on one occasion, "Whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered, "Thou art The Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona! for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven." (**Matthew 16:15-17**.) It was a grand course of education, then, that Jesus gave His Apostles.

And so as regarded the fig tree, the miracles of healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out demons, feeding the thousands, etc., it was not so important that certain persons be physically healed at that time, nor so important that the multitudes should not go hungry over night, nor that Divine displeasure should be visited upon an unintelligent tree. But it was important that the disciples should get the needed lessons and see that the Lord's power could and would be exercised on their behalf; that, with the realization that the Lord was on their side and would guide and protect them, they would be able to exercise great confidence. It was important also that we should have this assurance of our Father's love and care over us as His children. It was important that our Lord's coming glory during His Kingdom Reign should be illustrated and shown forth.

THE FIG TREE A SYMBOL

There is a further thought as regards the fig tree. We believe that the fig tree is a representation of the Jewish nation. This nation had been God's fig tree. In due time God sent His Son seeking fruit from that nation, but He found none. The tree was barren. He found a few faithful individuals, but nationally nothing--*no fruit* as a nation; and the blight, or curse, of the Lord came upon the Jewish nation because with all their privileges and advantages they had not brought forth the proper fruits. Our Lord Jesus, five days before His crucifixion, pronounced their House desolate. "Behold, your House is left unto you desolate!"--**Matt. 23:38,39; Luke 13:34,35**.

Ever since that time, the Jews have been desolate and blighted as a nation. But there is a promise that this blighted fig tree shall again become a living tree--a living nation. They are to be restored to Divine favor, after their "double" of disfavor has been fulfilled. [See **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**, Vol. 2, pp. 217-230.] This "double" we understand has been accomplished, and this is the meaning of the great awakening now among the Jews, and of the great Zionist movement.

Speaking of the time of His Second Advent and of the nearness then of the Kingdom, Jesus said, "Learn a parable of the fig tree: When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near; so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors." (**Mark 13:28,29**.) The Jewish nation has been having a long winter time. But the spring time of this nation is now at hand. We already see this fig tree putting forth leaves. So we see that the lesson of the blighted fig tree was not merely a lesson for an hour, but a lesson to all the Lord's people from that time even until now.

Z '08, 25 – 27; R4122

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

--**JOHN 2:13-22**--JANUARY 26.--

Golden Text:--"Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, forever."--Psalm 93:5.

WE are aware that there are many scholars who believe that there were two cleansings of the Temple by our Lord. It is admitted by all that one cleansing occurred at the last Passover which Jesus attended a few days before his crucifixion. This is well attested by **Matthew 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:14**. Our lesson is taken from John's Gospel, and because this incident is grouped with others which occurred in the beginning of the Lord's ministry it is assumed, we believe without sufficient authority, that

there were two cleansings, the one at the beginning, the other at the close of our Lord's ministry. It is acknowledged, however, that John's Gospel was written long after the others, and apparently with the intention of supplying certain details that were overlooked by the other historians. To our understanding Jesus began his teachings in a rather quiet manner, reserving many of his mightiest works for the last, amongst others the calling of Lazarus from the tomb, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the

ass, and the cleansing of the Temple. This latter act has a peculiar significance when we remember that it followed our Lord's assumption of the office of King--which he did just five days before his crucifixion, when he rode upon the ass in fulfilment of the prophecy, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass." (*Zech. 9:9.*) Thus recognized by the multitude as the King of the Jews, our Lord exercised kingly authority in the cleansing of the Temple, and was no doubt backed up in the matter by the sentiment of the throng which had just acclaimed him the son of David with hosannas. It was under these circumstances that none attempted resistance.

It was a requirement of the Jewish Law that the devout of the nation should assemble at the Passover season to keep the Feast of Passover in celebration of their deliverance from Egypt and the sparing of their firstborn on the preceding night. Josephus tells us that sometimes the population of Jerusalem on such an occasion was swelled to the number of two millions. Far more than half of these must have camped outside the city, unable to find lodgings within. It was the custom on such occasions to offer sacrifices, some representing thankfulness, some consecration and others contrition. Of course the multitude of strangers from afar rarely brought with them the doves or pigeons or lambs, etc., which they presented in sacrifice. The supply of these animals for sacrifice became quite a business on such occasions. Moreover, there was a certain Temple tax levied, which must be paid in a particular kind of money called the "shekel of the sanctuary." The last coinage of these was in B.C. 140, hence they were quite scarce in our Lord's day and sold at a premium. Roman coin was circulated throughout Palestine in general merchandising, so that when the time came at the Passover for the paying of the Temple tax with the Temple money not only visitors from foreign lands needed to purchase shekels of the sanctuary but also the home folk.

"TAKE THESE THINGS HENCE"

In consequence of these conditions the Temple area became quite a house of merchandise and money-changing, and as the necessities of the people were taken advantage of and high prices charged, our Lord called the place a "den of thieves." (*Matt. 21:13.*) In imagining the scene we are not to think of money-changers, sheep and dove-traders, etc., in the Temple

PLAN OF THE TEMPLE IN OUR LORD'S DAY

proper, but in its outer courts, the whole of which was designated the Temple or the house of God. This trading was probably carried on in what was known as the Court of the Gentiles. Into the holiest precincts of the Temple proper only the priests were permitted to enter; into the enclosure where the altar was located the Levites were

also permitted; outside of this was the Court of the men of Israel, and still further out a Court of the women, and beyond this enclosure the Court of the Gentiles, provided to the intent that all nationalities might there congregate for worship. Our Lord referred to this fact saying, "It is written, My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations." (*Mark 11:17.*) Probably the Court of the Gentiles was little used, as few Gentiles had become sincere converts to Judaism. The size of the court apportioned to them was probably symbolical of the larger proportionate numbers who should ultimately come into the Lord's favor and become true disciples and fellow-heirs with the Jews of divine favor.

It is claimed that any Jew under the Law had the right to do as Jesus did in the matter of driving out the traders, but very evidently no Jew had previously attempted it. The scourge of small cords could not have done serious damage to anyone, but we do not know that our Lord used it upon humanity. He may have driven out the animals, whose owners would follow them, and it will be noticed that he did not set at liberty the doves, which could not so easily have been recovered, but permitted their owners to take them away. The overturning of the tables of the money-changers would not only stop their usurious exchange business, but keep them busy looking after their coin. We may be sure from the fact that our Lord lived under the Law and obeyed it that his conduct on this occasion was quite within the recognized proprieties, even though it was unusual, and even though he himself had visited the Temple time and again as a Jew, and had witnessed these same scenes but had not interfered with them. This we consider to be a proof that the occurrence took place but once, and that after our Lord had assumed the office of King--just before his crucifixion. Thus the statement, "The zeal of thine house hath consumed me," was fulfilled.

THE CLEANSING IN THE ANTITYPE

When we remember that the Law was a shadow of better things coming, that the Jewish people typified Spiritual Israel, and that their Temple typified the Gospel Church with its various classes, then we begin to see how we may look here for a parallel of that cleansing work of the Jewish harvest. Those familiar with Volume II., STUDIES, will remember that the Jewish dispensation is the parallel to the Gospel dispensation in very many particulars, including that of time and the fact that it ended with a harvest period, and that our Lord at his first advent was the chief reaper in the Jewish harvest, as he is to be the chief reaper in the Gospel harvest at his second advent. We have noted also the fact that the time parallel of October, 1874, corresponds to the beginning of our Lord's ministry at the time of his baptism, and that

April, 1878, corresponds to the time of our Lord's acceptance of the office of King, riding upon the ass and receiving the shouts of the multitude, and then proceeding to the Temple cleansing work. Our thought is that the antitypical cleansing of the Lord's Temple has been in progress since the spring of 1878.

Within the hallowed precincts of the nominal Temple of today are many who have long been making merchandise of their privileges, opportunities and knowledge. All intelligent people well know that religious matters are to a large extent made merchandise of. Amongst the Roman Catholics everything possible is hedged about with penalties and prohibitions and limitations, so that the people are led to believe that they can present nothing acceptable to God except as they receive it through their priesthood. They are expected to pay the priesthood for every birth and the baptism of the child; they are expected to pay at every service, that they may be participants in the blessings of the common mass; they are expected to pay for every blessed scapular sprinkled with holy water; they are expected to pay for every funeral service and for every prayer, as well as for the privilege of being buried in holy ground. In all this we have a close counterpart to that which our Lord denominated a den of thieves, making merchandise of divine things.

As for Protestants, there are many evidences of the same spirit amongst them, but as they represent a more intelligent class, the exactions upon them by the clergy are the more refined. With few exceptions the payment for baptisms and funerals and marriages is apparently left optional. This is the wisest way with this class of worshippers. Neither are there attempts made to collect money for saying masses for the dead, to exact a specific fee from each one occupying a place at a service, though the collection plate is passed with regularity, and frequently strong appeals are made for money, and sometimes with the announcement that nothing inferior to a silver piece will be acceptable. It is to the credit of Protestants that they do not tax the living for prayers and masses for the dead, as do the Roman Catholics. Nevertheless strong impression is sought to be made upon all, that membership, either in a Catholic Church or in some one of the numerous Protestant ones, is necessary to salvation, and that liberality to the Church of one's choice is also a necessity. Although rarely so stated, it is implied that eternal torment is the alternative. We are not inveighing against charity and liberality for the spread of the Gospel of Christ: neither did Jesus say one word against liberal giving on the part of the Jews for the support of the Temple. Our Lord's condemnation fell upon those who were making merchandise of the opportunity, circumstance and conditions. It is our belief, indeed, that Christian people have been blessed in their response to the numerous demands: nevertheless the principle is all wrong. Whatever is given to the Lord

should be voluntarily done, with love for him, with a desire to render unto him the first-fruits, the best of all that we possess, time, influence, money, etc.

"THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY"

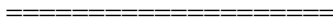
The Jews demanded of the Lord by what authority he set up so high a standard as he required of them in the cleansing of the Temple. He answered them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." Of course they could not understand that it was one of our Lord's dark sayings, which is fully comprehended even yet by only a few. The Jews thought our Lord spoke slightly of the Temple of which they were so proud, which just recently had been finished, after being in process of construction for forty-six years. They were incensed at him, and we recall that this was one of the charges against him a few days later. When he was arraigned before the High Priest it was said that he had blasphemed the Temple, spoken slightly of it in declaring that he would raise it up again, if destroyed, within three days. "But he spake of the Temple of his Body." The disciples evidently got the thought that he referred to his fleshly body as the Temple of God, and supposed that our Lord's prediction was fulfilled three days after his crucifixion. But we cannot so view the matter. To our understanding the Lord spake of the Temple of his Body--of the Church, his Body--of the Temple of which the Apostle Peter subsequently wrote, that we as living stones are built together upon Christ for a habitation of God through the Spirit. To suppose that our Lord spoke of the fleshly body as the Temple, and to suppose that that fleshly body was raised on the third day, would be to suppose that our Lord did not fully pay over the price necessary for our redemption.

Such a view would contradict his own statement, "My flesh I give for the life of the world." (*John 6:51*.) He gave his flesh not only for three days but forever, and he was raised by the Father's power from the grave the Lord of glory. As the Apostle declares, "Now the Lord is that Spirit" (*2 Cor. 3:17*); and again, "He was put to death in the flesh but quickened in the Spirit" (*1 Pet. 3:18*); and again, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, now know we him so no more." (*2 Cor. 5:16*.) The flesh was consecrated to death at the beginning of our Lord's ministry, and this great sacrifice was symbolized in his baptism. It was the New Creature that was there begotten of the holy Spirit (to which fact John bore witness), which grew during the Lord's three and a half years of ministry; and it was the New Creature, the Spirit begotten, that was born of the Spirit on the third day, when our Lord arose from the dead. Our Lord's change was but a sample of that which is to come to all of his true followers, as the Apostle explains, saying, It is sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in

glory; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body. (*I Cor. 15:43,44.*) So, then, our Lord's body of flesh, destroyed by the Jews at Calvary, was not restored on the third day. No restitution work was accomplished in him, but a complete change, because, as the Apostle declares, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."--*I Cor. 15:50.*

But, on the other hand, we have the Scriptural declaration that the Church is the Body of Christ, of which the consecrated faithful are "members in particular." (*I Cor. 12:27.*) We see that as human beings our Lord the Head, and all the members of his Body, have been suffering the destruction of the flesh, have been sacrificing their human nature throughout this Gospel Age, and we see that in due time this glorious Church, the New Creation, will in the First Resurrection come forth a glorious Temple of God, composed of

living stones and filled with the glory of God. This will be on the third day also, for if we consider the six thousand years past as six days of a great week, and the Millennial Age as the seventh or Sabbath day of that week, we find that it was early in the fifth of these days that our Lord sacrificed, that many of his followers suffered likewise during that and the following sixth day, and that the seventh day, into which we have chronologically entered since 1872, is thus the third day, in which, very early in the morning, the entire Body of Christ, the King of glory, will be perfected. Then the great Temple of God will be complete and ready for the great work of the Millennial Age, the blessing of all the families of the earth, and through it they all may have the opportunity of coming into full harmony with God and gaining the blessing thereof--eternal life.



Chapter 5: Three Days Before the Crucifixion:

Matthew 22: 15-46

22:15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in [his] talk.
22:16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any [man]: for thou regardest not the person of men.
22:17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?
22:18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, [ye] hypocrites?
22:19 Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.
22:20 And he saith unto them, Whose [is] this image and superscription?
22:21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.
22:22 When they had heard [these words], they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.
22:23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,
22:24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.
22:25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:
22:26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.
22:27 And last of all the woman died also.
22:28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.
22:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.
22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.
22:31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,
22:32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.
22:33 And when the multitude heard [this], they were astonished at his doctrine.
22:34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.
22:35 Then one of them, [which was] a lawyer, asked [him a question], tempting him, and saying,
22:36 Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law?
22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.
22:38 This is the first and great commandment.
22:39 And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
22:40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
22:41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,
22:42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, [The son] of David.
22:43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,
22:44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?
22:45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?
22:46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any [man] from that day forth ask him any more [questions].

Matthew 23: 14-39

23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
23:16 Woe unto you, [ye] blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!
23:17 [Ye] fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?
23:18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.
23:19 [Ye] fools and blind: for whether [is] greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?
23:20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

23:21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.
23:22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.
23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier [matters] of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.
23:24 [Ye] blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.
23:25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.
23:26 [Thou] blind Pharisee, cleanse first that [which is] within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.
23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead [men's] bones, and of all uncleanness.
23:28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.
23:29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,
23:30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.
23:31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.
23:32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.
23:33 [Ye] serpents, [ye] generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?
23:34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and [some] of them ye shall kill and crucify; and [some] of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute [them] from city to city:
23:35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias [[son of Barachias,]] whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.
23:36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.
23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!
23:38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.
23:39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed [is] he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Matthew 25:1-13

25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
25:2 And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish.
25:3 They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
25:4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
25:5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
25:6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom [[cometh;]] go ye out to meet him.
25:7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
25:8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
25:9 But the wise answered, saying, [Not so]; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.
25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
25:11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

TEACHING WITH AUTHORITY

--MARK 12:13-27.--SEPTEMBER 16.--

Golden Text:--"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

TODAY'S lesson considers the events of the last day of our Lord's public ministry. As already noted, he rested at Bethany over the Sabbath and participated in a feast to his honor that (Jewish) Sabbath eve. The next day, the first day of the week --Sunday--he rode on the ass, making a triumphal entry into the city of the great King. Mark informs us that he visited the Temple on that occasion, looking about on the condition of things, and that it was the next day, Monday, that he drove out the money-changers, etc. Now we come to the day following, Tuesday, the last day of his public teaching. Note the record thus: *John 12:1* informs us that the Feast at Bethany was "six days before the Passover"--Sabbath; *Mark 11:1* records the events of the next day, Sunday; *Mark 11:2-19* relates the events of Monday; *Mark 14:1* shows that Wednesday and Thursday intervened before the Passover Feast began.

PERPLEXITY OF THE JEWISH RULERS

The leading men of all the various sects and parties were in perplexity how to deal with Jesus. They believed him to be an impostor, because his claims seemed to them to be absurd, contrary to all worldly wisdom, the only kind which they possessed. True, they recognized that he was a brilliant man, that he had great force and power with the common people. But they said to themselves, "Although he does not publicly claim to be the Messiah he nevertheless gives that intimation--promising his disciples participation with him in the Kingdom when he shall be exalted to power --and is leading the people to believe that by and by the long-expected Kingdom of God will be established. He is making headway, his miracles being especially effective in supporting his claims; he is establishing thus a new sect, a new party, that will prove antagonistic to all present sects and parties, and diminish our influence with the people. Although we have differences of opinion on many subjects we are all striving together for the favor of the great Roman empire, under whose control we are now. We are seeking to have greater and greater liberties and privileges, and if this new party succeeds it will diminish our influence at Rome and appear to the emperor and senate like a rebellion. The Romans already have that opinion of us as a people, that we are rebellious, etc., and we have been endeavoring to allay that sentiment and establish confidence in the stability of our religious system and its power over our people. This new religious system, therefore, threatens not only the prosperity of our various denominations but

also the prosperity of our nation. Jesus should be killed for the good of the cause: as patriots we owe it to ourselves and to the whole nation and its future welfare."

We are informed that they sought to kill him, and that privately they had determined this from the time of his calling Lazarus back from the tomb. His triumphal entry at the head of a multitude shouting, "Hosanna to the son of David," increased their concern and their determination against him. His driving out of the money-changers, etc., from the Temple was a further manifestation of his consciousness of his power with the common people. Apparently there was only one way to get to him: the people evidently would not stand by quietly and see him injured. Whatever was to be done must be accomplished in a quiet and stealthy manner and quickly. Moreover, the people had a reverence for the Roman soldiers, and it would be desirable therefore to have him executed under Pilate's decree. But how could they bring the matter before Pilate? What charges could they make? It was the people who had proclaimed him king and not himself. They must if possible get him to commit himself to some treasonable statement, on account of which they could bring him before Pilate as an enemy of the Roman empire, and thus have him legally executed in a manner which the public could not resist. The Romans permitted the Jews to govern themselves, merely stipulating for tribute and loyalty to Rome; and Pilate with his soldiers resided at Jerusalem, not to interfere with Jewish laws and customs, but merely to preserve the peace and the dignity of Rome.

AN ENTANGLING QUESTION

With a view to getting Jesus to commit himself as an opponent of the Roman Empire, two groups of Jews came to Jesus with a question. The Pharisees in a general way held that the Jews as the people of God were to be the rulers of all other peoples, and that they should never pay tribute, taxes, to other rulers. Their teachings on these lines, however, were privately given, for fear of being apprehended as traitors to Rome. The Herodians, on the contrary, were Jews who took sides with Herod, and stood firmly and boldly and publicly for the suzerainty of the Roman Empire, claiming that it was to the advantage of the people of Israel to be under the Roman power, and that the paying of tribute was right and proper. The common people were understood to specially favor the view held by the Pharisees and were opposed to the view of

the Herodians. Representatives of these two classes, coming to Jesus in public where he was teaching and where the common people could hear the question and note the answer, hoped to get him to do one of two things: either declare with the Herodians that the tax was right and proper and thus break his influence with the common people, or publicly to side with the Pharisees and common people, denounce the tax tribute, declare it improper and contrary to the divine will, etc., and thus make declaration that under no conditions then prevailing could the instigation of insurrection amongst the Jews in opposition to the tribute tax be construed as traitorous.

Note the subtlety of the entire program: they addressed Jesus, saying, "Teacher, we know that thou art true and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of man, but of a truth teachest the way of God." Here all the stress was laid upon his courage to utter truth, to be faithful to God at any cost, to be a teacher of the people on whom they could thoroughly rely, fearing nothing for himself. All this was so stated in order that the Master in the presence of the multitude might be compelled to give a straightforward answer to the question they were about to put, and that answer they fully believed would be one that would convict him of treason. Then came the question: "Is it lawful [according to the Law of Moses] to give tribute unto Caesar or not?" Shall we give or shall we not give?

A HEAVENLY-WISE REPLY

Our Lord understood the situation in an instant and said, "Why tempt ye me?"--Why do you try to entrap me? Look at the motives in your own hearts and judge of how much sincerity or falsity is there. Get a lesson out of this matter that will do you good; show me the tribute coin. They handed him a silver penny or denarius of Tiberius Caesar, stamped with the likeness of Caesar and an inscription concerning him, just as coins of today in Europe bear the image and superscription of the reigning sovereign. Jesus inquired of his tormentors, "Whose image and superscription is this [on this coin]?" They replied, "Caesar's." Then he gave them the answer to their question, saying, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Jesus did not go into the question of how much advantage the Jewish nation was reaping from the protection afforded the Jews against the assaults of other nations. He did not attempt to declare that justice was connected with every feature of the tribute tax, but he did sum up the matter in those few words, "If Caesar has some just claims against you, render to him accordingly--this will not interfere with God's just claims against you, which you should be equally ready to meet." This answer was not merely an evasion of the question: it was an answer in the full sense, probably far beyond what

they could fully comprehend; but they did comprehend that they had failed to entrap him, that he had answered their question in a manner which would never have occurred to them, that he had a wisdom far beyond theirs and all natural earthly wisdom--he had the wisdom from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits.--*Jas. 3:17*.

ADMONITION APPROPRIATE TO US

The Scriptural assurance that all things work together for good to them that love God is illustrated in this matter. The Pharisees, the Herodians, intended evil to the Lord and his apostles, their teachings, etc. -- they designed their overthrow. But in the Lord's providence the very reverse of this resulted. A lesson came to the common people who heard, a lesson which doubtless bore fruit in any who were in a right condition of heart; but the lesson was especially profitable, we are assured, to the apostles and to all of the Lord's followers since. Its lesson is that we are not called upon to war with carnal weapons against the powers that be--that all the followers of the Lord Jesus are to seek peace and pursue it, endeavoring to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith, and to speak evil of and to do evil to none.

To the disciples this would imply that the affairs of the world may be safely left with the world, under the Lord's supervision, for he is able to make even the wrath of men to praise him; the remainder he can restrain, and in due time all of his gracious purposes will be accomplished. (*Psa. 76:10*.) Until that due time shall come we are with patience to wait for it, knowing that in the end it will come and will not tarry. The Lord's due time for the changes in the world's affairs is what we are waiting on, and meantime we are occupying, using, our talents and opportunities, not in fighting worldly battles either by tongue or pen or with other earthly weapons, but fighting the good fight of faith, laying hold upon eternal life, whereunto we are called, that we may thus be prepared by the trials and difficulties and sacrifices of the present time for the glorious share in his Kingdom reign and blessing which the Lord has promised to us as his followers if we are faithful.

If Caesar commands taxes and they are general we are not to dispute them. When the Lord's time shall come, when Caesar no longer shall collect taxes from the heirs of the Kingdom, it will be manifest to us, for then Caesar will have no power or authority to collect these. If Caesar merely gives us liberty to vote it is not at all necessary that we should accept or use that liberty; should he by and by command us to vote, it would be proper for us to comply and use our best judgment. But in the absence of any command or

compulsion it would seem that those consecrated to be followers of the Lamb, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, would have plenty to do in following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth--in fulfilling the terms of their consecration as members of the body of Christ, in doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

WHAT WE RENDER TO GOD

What we shall render to God depends upon who we are and what we see and know respecting him and his will. The world in general realizes some responsibility to a Creator or First Cause, but their enlightenment being limited their responsibilities are correspondingly limited. Those who have seen and heard and tasted that God is gracious, that his favor has been manifested in the redemption price paid at Calvary, have greater privileges than their less enlightened neighbors and correspondingly greater responsibilities. To these it is but a reasonable service that they should present to the Lord the little all that they possess in this present life, and this becomes a still more reasonable matter when they learn that God has sent forth during this Gospel age a special message of invitation to joint-heirship with his Son in the Kingdom. Those who are thus enlightened and who possess any measure of wisdom should, it would seem, joyfully lay aside every weight and besetting sin and earthly ambition, and strive to attain to the gracious things of the divine promise to the seed of Abraham.--*Gal. 3:29*.

The Prophet, speaking for this class of holy favored ones of this Gospel age, the consecrated, inquires, What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits to us? What would be the proper course for such to pursue in their relationship to God? The Lord through the Prophet gives the correct answer, saying, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." (*Psa. 116:12,13*.) The cup of salvation, as our Master explains, has a two-fold significance: it implies that we all share with him in his cup of suffering, of self-denial, of self-abasement for the sake of the Lord's cause in this time when sin abounds, when the prince of this world rules in the hearts of the majority, when darkness covers the earth, society, and gross darkness the heathen. We have the promise that those who drink of the Lord's cup now will also drink of his cup of rejoicing and blessing and refreshment in the Kingdom.

In other words, in the divine order these two features are indissolubly joined, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him," if we partake of the trials and difficulties and oppositions incidental to faithfulness to the Lord, we shall have a share with him in the glory, honor and immortality by and by; but if we refuse the cup of trial and discipline and experience and suffering of this present time we are thus also incidentally refusing and passing by the cup of glory and blessing of the

Millennial age and of eternity. Let us take the cup, let us appropriate it, let us render unto the Lord our God our reasonable service--a full consecration of heart and life. And this appreciation of a reasonable service will doubtless continue to increase before the mental vision: as we go onward we will perceive greater privileges and opportunities of sacrifice, and as we measure up to these will get clearer and better and grander views of the coming glories, and also our heavenly rewards.

"WHOSE WIFE SHALL SHE BE?"

When the Pharisees and Herodians withdrew, discomfited by our Lord's wise answer, representatives of another sect, the Sadducees, came with a question to entrap him. To appreciate their question we must understand that the Sadducees were a class of Jews well educated, intellectual, but utterly lacking in any faith respecting a future life. Whether or not they believed in a God, we are not informed, but that they did not believe in invisible angels or spirit beings of any kind, and that they denied that there would be a resurrection for mankind more than for the brute beast was clearly stated. These were worldly-wise men who believed that their countrymen were laboring under a foolish delusion in expecting any blessings in the future. They held that when a man dies that is the end of him. The Sadducees presented a question which they thought would show up the weakness of Jesus' position before the people, and incidentally also the weakness of the theories of other Jews.

Their question was probably a suppositious one, though stated as a fact. They cited the Jewish Law respecting Jewish marriage stated in *Deuteronomy 25:5-10*. The object of that law seemingly was to prevent the obliteration of any family. The suppositious case was that under this law one brother married and, dying without children, the second brother married his wife, and so on until the seven brethren had married the one woman, each in turn. Now the query was, Whose wife should she be in the resurrection, since she was the wife of the seven during her earthly life? The question was intended to show the absurdity of believing in a resurrection, that it would occasion all kinds of confusion, etc.

Our Lord's answer was, Is not your difficulty, your error, this--that ye understand not the Scriptures nor the power of God? If you sufficiently appreciated the power of God you would know that he who is able to raise the dead is able also to order and direct all the incidental affairs connected with the resurrection of mankind. If you had a proper appreciation of God's character you would have faith in him and would not stumble over such a trivial matter as this. Leave it with God. Let me explain, however, that when they shall rise from the dead they will neither marry nor be given

in marriage, but will be like the angels in heaven, sexless. This was a new thought to them.

Our Lord did not attempt a particular answer to their question, knowing (1) that they were not sincere questioners, and that such an explanation would be like casting pearls before swine; (2) furthermore, it was not yet time to give an explanation of many of the details respecting the resurrection. Many of those details belong only to the spiritual, and could not be understood by any except those begotten of the Spirit, and the Spirit begetting could not come until Pentecost, and Pentecost could not come until after the Lord had paid our penalty with the sacrifice of himself and had ascended up on high and appeared in the presence of God on our behalf.

From our standpoint, however, we see that our Lord, without designating the resurrection of the Church or the resurrection of the world, stated the matter broadly in such a way as to apply to both. For instance, those who will constitute the Church, and who will be changed from earthly to heavenly nature in the First Resurrection--"changed in a moment"--will be Spirit beings like unto our Lord, and like unto the angels also in respect that they will be sexless. As for the world, which will not be changed from earthly to heavenly nature, and will not experience a resurrection change in a moment, but a gradual change or uplift, progressing step by step during the thousand years of the "times of restitution," it will also be true that when they shall have attained that world and shall have attained the resurrection from the dead they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be sexless. That is to say, the restored human family will, during the period of restitution, lose their sexual distinctions, and at the end of the thousand years be all of them in perfection, like Adam was before Eve was taken from his side.

"NOT THE GOD OF THE DEAD"

Having answered their question that the resurrection difficulties they anticipated arose from a failure to appreciate the divine power then in control, our Lord passed onward in the argument to show that they did not grasp the spirit of the Scriptural testimony. They had reasoned that the Old Testament said very little about resurrection anyway. Our Lord proceeded to show them that there were various features of the Scriptures which indirectly taught the resurrection without mentioning it in so many words. He pointed them to the time when the Lord appeared to Moses and spoke to him from the burning bush, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Jesus' argument with the Sadducees was that since Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were at this time dead, for God to thus speak of them implied a resurrection of the dead, implied that he still recognized them in some sense or degree, that they were not extinct--that God, for instance, would not speak of being the God of a dead camel or a dead dog, because

he had made no provision for a resurrection of camels, dogs, etc., but his provision for the resurrection of the human dead is a fact, and constitutes a full explanation of his statement here--that he is still the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We live in a day when Satan's delusions through Platonic philosophy has gained a large control over the world. All the heathen today believe that death is not death, but an entrance into a fuller life, and Christian people in general so believe, some of them even using this passage of Scripture to demonstrate their belief, saying that if God be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob they could not have been dead in any sense of the word, but must have been alive somewhere, they know not where. We answer that these also err in not giving proper attention to the Scriptures, which teach not that the dead are alive, but that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. This is what our Lord taught, and this is therefore what all of his followers should believe if they would have the full blessing intended for those who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Note that our Lord so expresses it: his argument is based upon and introduced by the words, "As touching the dead that they arise, have ye not heard," etc.--he does not say "as touching the living that they shall arise," for how can the living arise? it is the dead who need a resurrection. The Scriptures never suggested the absurdity of the resurrection of the living, but continually assure us of the resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust.--*Acts 24:15*.

Every doctrine of the Bible is intimately associated with the statement that the wages of sin is literal, actual death--not merely the death of the body, but "the soul that sinneth it shall die." (*Ezek. 18:4*.) The death of the soul was the penalty upon Adam and upon all of his race; hence our Lord redeemed our souls from the tomb (*Psalms 49:15*), and the redemption price he gave was his own soul, his own being, when "he poured out his soul unto death," "he made his soul an offering for sin." (*Isa. 53:10,12*.) Since it is the souls of men that are redeemed the resurrection is to be a resurrection of the souls, and the resurrection of our Lord, we are told, was a resurrection of his soul, as foretold by the Prophet and confirmed by the Apostle, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol," hades, in the tomb.--*Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:31*.

While it is unwise to push this feature of the Truth to the front because of the prejudice that exists in the minds of so many of the Lord's people, and because it is proper that we should be wise fishers of men, nevertheless it is absolutely indispensable to an appreciation of the divine plan that all should come ultimately to see that this is the fundamental teaching of God's Word, and to build the proper faith structure in harmony therewith. Adam died and we in him--

Christ died as our Redeemer, and thereby made possible the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, as promised in God's Word. We who now are called have the special invitation to be of the just, the justified, the acceptable with God--to have part in the First Resurrection and be the kings and priests to reign with

our Lord on the earth, to bless the world and to grant to mankind in general the gradual uplifting or raising up out of sin-and-death conditions to the full perfection of human nature lost in Adam and redeemed by the precious blood.

Z '96, 115 – 116; R1982

PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

--MAY 24.--*Luke 20:9-19.*--

Parallel accounts--Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12.

Golden Text--"The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."--Luke 20:17.

THIS parable formed a part of our Lord's discourse on the last day of his public ministry. He had been teaching daily in the Temple, and the people, much impressed by his mighty works and his wonderful words, "were very attentive to hear him." (*Luke 19:47,48.*) But the more his fame spread abroad and the people were influenced by his teaching, the more the envy and opposition of the scribes and Pharisees increased and intensified into a settled murderous hatred, which plotted and schemed to accomplish his death. It was in this spirit and intent that the chief priests and scribes and elders of Israel came upon him with what they esteemed puzzling questions, seeking to entrap him in his words and thereby to gain some pretext for his arrest.

The shrewdness with which our Lord met their attacks commands the admiration of all. He was more than a match for all the gainsayers, putting them to silence and to shame. Then he spoke this parable, which they perceived to be against them, and which the more angered them, so that they would have laid hands on him then had they not feared the people.--*Verse 19.*

In the parable, the owner of the vineyard represented God, and the "vineyard" represented the Jewish nation as described under the same figure in *Isaiah 5:1-7.*--"For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant." God had done much for his vineyard in the way of planting and care and cultivation; and in view of this he inquires (*Isa. 5:4*), "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" But nevertheless it repaid him wild grapes instead of good grapes,--"and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry, etc." And the "husbandmen" to whom the vineyard was let were the divinely constituted religious leaders of the nation. These husbandmen had this stewardship from the time of the exodus down to the time of the coming of Messiah, a period of nearly nineteen centuries.

At various seasons during the age God specially looked for fruits of righteousness, sending to them his

faithful prophets, who were lightly esteemed and illy treated--especially by the husbandmen.--*Matt. 23:31,32.*

Last of all, in the harvest or end of the age, God sent unto them his Son, saying, "It may be they will reverence my Son." But no, in their selfish ambition to retain their stewardship, they said among themselves, "This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." "So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him." The application of the parable was too manifest to be misunderstood. The guilty consciences needed no further accusation. The self-righteous hypocrites perceived that the great Teacher had read their hearts and was aware of their dark designs.

In the further progress of the parable was the prophecy of his own final triumph, even though they should kill him; for he was the stone of which the Psalmist prophesied, saying, "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner" (*Psa. 118:22*), the building of God being referred to as a pyramid, of which the topstone is the chief corner stone. (See also *Zech. 4:7.*) This stone might indeed be rejected by them then, but that would not hinder its exaltation in God's due time as the chief stone in the glorious spiritual temple of God.

In stumbling over Christ at his first advent, the Jewish nation was indeed broken to pieces; and ever since they have been a nation scattered and peeled (*Isa. 18:2*), all the world being witness to the fact. The world is also witness to the fact that those wicked husbandmen who crucified the Lord were destroyed as such. They lost their prestige and power and honor and office (and many of them doubtless perished literally in the destruction of Jerusalem), and were superseded by the more worthy apostles and teachers of the gospel of Christ.

Such was the testimony of Christ against fleshly Israel as a people, and against their religious leaders and teachers; and as we read the prophecy and mark

how true to the letter has been the fulfilment, we should not fail to mark also another prophecy, pointing to a double fulfilment,--first, upon fleshly Israel, and, secondly, upon nominal spiritual Israel, or the nominal Christian Church. It reads,--"And he shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to *both* the houses of Israel." (*Isa. 8:14.*) In this as in other things the two houses of Israel, the fleshly of the Jewish age, and the spiritual of the Gospel age, stand related to each other as type and antitype; and the likeness is striking. The attitude of the public teachers of to-day, like those of the Jewish age, is against the Lord and the truth now due in these days of his presence. They are closing their eyes to the light that is now shining, and, as a result, both they and all who follow their leading are stumbling into the ditch of infidelity; and soon they will all be overwhelmed in the great tribulation of which the Lord and the prophet forewarn us.--*Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1; Rev. 18:4.*

The result of the stumbling of the nominal gospel Church over this stone will be the same as in the case of the Jewish Church: they will be broken; the whole institution will be disintegrated, and only the faithful remnant of this age (as of that) will be gathered into the Kingdom of God--a "little flock" to whom "it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom."

But when this corner stone crowns the finished temple of God, the Church glorified, when the Kingdom is established in glory and power, upon whomsoever this stone falls it will grind him to powder; it will utterly destroy him. "Every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."--*Acts 3:23.*

With the example of the stumbling of fleshly Israel in view, how careful should every Christian be to see to it that he is not among those of this age who form the antitype-- either of the blind leaders or of the blind multitudes who follow their leading into the yawning ditch which shall surely engulf all of the unfaithful.

=====

Chapter 6: Two Days Before the Crucifixion:

Z '02, 131 – 143; R3000

YEARLY RECKONINGS--SPIRITUAL ACCOUNTS.

*"Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done,
and thy thoughts which are to usward: they can not be reckoned
up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them,
they are more than can be numbered."--Psalm 40:5.*

BUSINESS MEN are at great expense to secure accuracy in their accounts. Millions of dollars are spent every year in details of bookkeeping, an important part of which is to enable proprietors to know definitely upon which items of their business there is a profit, and upon which there is a loss,--to the intent that the profitable branches may be increased, and the unprofitable ones corrected. This is admittedly a wise procedure.

If the case be such with those who are seeking temporal wealth and its honors, how much more careful accounting should be attempted in connection with spiritual matters! The Lord's people are not merely seeking for wealth, which will last for a few years, and then must be parted with--at the tomb, if not sooner;--they are seeking for the riches which perish not, and which thieves do not break into and steal. More than this, with the heavenly riches they are assuredly seeking also heavenly honors and glories-- even joint-heirship with the King of kings and Lord of lords, in the Millennial Kingdom, and in the glorious opportunities which it will bring in connection with the promised blessing of all the families of the earth.

The general settlement day with the world is at the close of the old year, and the beginning of a new one, but with the Church an equally appropriate occasion, or, indeed, a still more appropriate one, comes with the annual remembrancer of our Lord's death as our Passover Lamb--and of our participation with him in his sacrifice; and in the Easter celebration of his resurrection, and of our figurative rising with him to walk in newness of life--in prospect of the actual resurrection in which, if faithful, we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to be like our glorious Redeemer, to see him as he is, and to share his glory.

Let us see how our spiritual accounts stand for the year past--since last we broke together the emblems of our Redeemer's sacrifice and of our own participation with him. Let us note whether or not the year's experiences have brought us nearer to the Lord, or have in any measure separated us from the warmth of his love and fellowship, and from fellowship with fellow members of his body. Every year should find us nearer to the Lord, not only in the purposes of our hearts, but in the conduct

of our lives,-- nearer to the perfect standard. We should be making progress, growing in all the graces of the spirit, and growing also in our knowledge and appreciation of the Lord and of his wonderful plan.

We trust that each reader, as he takes a conscientious view of the situation, whichever way he feels that the balance stands (favorable or unfavorable, as compared with a year ago), can nevertheless thank God that by his grace we are what we are, and where we are;--still *his*, with *hearts* striving for things of the spirit, and not for things of the flesh. If any have slipped to some extent backward, let such thank the Lord that matters are not worse than they are, that they have not wholly let go of his hand, and relinquished their share in the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word. Let them thank God that this day of reckoning and reviewing of accounts finds them desirous of being on the Lord's side, and making a better record during the year before us. Let us look together at our text, and see if we cannot joint heartily with the Prophet in the sentiment expressed. He divides the subject into two parts. (1) Thankfulness to God for his wonderful work of grace already done or accomplished; and (2) for his thoughts, his plans, his purposes, toward us, which are not yet accomplished, and which we have grasped by his promises, with our arms of faith.

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.

Let us proceed in our calculation of present assets, and in our balancing of the year; and let us not be content simply with generalities in the balance. Let us retrospectively scrutinize the privileges and mercies enjoyed during the year, and the use we made of them and the blessings we derived. Let us carefully note which features of our daily course have been most helpful to us, and which have to any extent retarded our spiritual progress, hindered our fellowship with the Lord, prevented our running with patience or with best results the race set before us in the Gospel. These items will necessarily vary with each individual--for no two are alike in temperament or environment. Each in his counting should weigh the advantages derived from fellowship and communion with the Lord in prayer; and should determine whether or not this feature of his spiritual interests could be advantageously expanded during the beginning year.

Each should consider, also not merely how much time he had spent in *talking* to the Lord, but also how much time he had spent in *listening* to the Lord's voice--in searching the Scriptures; in seeking to know the divine mind, the divine plan, as it pertains to himself

individually and to the Church and to the world. Included in this matter of listening to the Lord's voice, he should reckon the helps to Bible study provided by the Lord through the brethren, the members of the family, the members of the one body of Christ;--remembering the statement of the Apostle, that God himself had set the various members in the body as it hath pleased him; and that he set these members for the very purpose of blessing one another, edifying the Church, building it up in the most holy faith. True, we are to consider that the Apostle were set first, foremost, and hence, that their teachings are paramount; and that all other teachings are to be submitted to the test of harmony with the testimonies of the apostles and the prophets.

If any, on reckoning up, shall find that they have not made such good progress as they had hoped, or perhaps apparently less progress in the narrow way, than some others about them, let them consider to what extent this failure to progress was due to a *failure to use* the divinely appointed means for growth in grace and knowledge and love;--namely, the Word and the brotherhood. If the progress has not been so great as could be hoped, let another point be examined: see whether or not you have been as active as was possible in serving the truth. Consider that you have consecrated your entire life to the Lord, and that by his direction it is to be laid down, sacrificed, yielded up in the interest of his brethren, the Church. Consider, count, reckon, whether or not you have been faithful in this matter of laying down your life during the past year--faithful in serving the Church, the body of Christ, to the best of your ability. Remember that it is a part of the Lord's provision, that he who watereth shall himself be watered, that he who serves the truth to others may appropriate to himself the more abundantly at the Lord's table of grace and truth.

EXAMPLES OF PROPER COUNTING, VALUATION, ETC.

In our counting let us take some hints and suggestions from the inspired apostles; let us note how they counted matters and things--which matters they set down to the profit account, and which to the loss account. Harken to the Apostle Paul's words: "Neither count I my [earthly] life dear [precious, valuable] unto me." (*Acts 20:24*.) Again, "I count all things [earthly] but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (*Phil. 3:8*.) Paul's estimation was not merely that the future glories were worthy of some loss in the present time, but that even the *knowledge* of Christ (including the knowledge of God's grace toward us through him, and the knowledge and consequent opportunities of running the race for the great prize)--was alone worth the price; he estimated that the loss of

all things, in order to obtain this *knowledge* (and its opportunities), would be a great bargain. Let us thank God if we have this good asset--a knowledge of Christ,-- a knowledge of his character, and a deep appreciation of it, a knowledge of the plan which centers in him--no matter what it has cost us of earthly good; if we have this knowledge, if to us he is precious, we are rich today, thank God! The same Apostle proceeds to say that already he had suffered the loss of all things and did "*count* them but dung," that he might "win Christ, and be found in him"--a member of his body.

A further suggestion as to how to count is found in the Apostle James' words, "Count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience," etc. (*James 1:2*.) No doubt, as each looks back for a year, we see that there were numerous snares and temptations in our pathway. Over some, no doubt, we gained victories, readily; others perhaps we conquered with a severer struggle; and still others perhaps were only partial victories,--they were partially reverses, partially victories for our enemy.

What did these temptations bring us? What has been their value? One value, as the Apostle suggests, is the lesson of forbearance. They proved to us that we are still in the schooling time, in the testing time;--to demonstrate our loyalty to the Lord, and our worthiness, through his merit, to a share in his Kingdom. All wish frequently, no doubt, that the testings were all over, and that we were accepted to a place amongst the overcomers; but patience and faith and trust are to do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, willing and obedient to the Lord. Let the good work go on. Let us rejoice if our trials have brought us lessons of any kind that are profitable to us,--that have tended to make us stronger in character, more firm for truth and righteousness, more aware of our own weaknesses, and more on guard against the same. Even those conflicts which have resulted in only partial victories have possibly been to our advantage. Surely so, in proportion as we contended *earnestly* against our weaknesses or against the besetments of the Adversary. Even on points in which there may have been absolute failure, the result may be a strengthening of character, a crystallization of determination for greater zeal in that direction again; and a humility of heart before the Lord in prayer, which has caused us to remember the throne of grace afresh, and that thither we may flee in every moment of temptation and find the succor which we need.

The Apostle Paul summed up his account, and balanced it, as follows: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"--the faithful. (*Rom. 8:18*.) In our reckoning, in our account for the year, let us similarly reckon the things which we have suffered, whether they be few or many, small or great--whatever we suffered for Christ's sake, for righteousness' sake, for

the truth's sake,-- let us rejoice therein, and endeavor for the coming year, to be so much more faithful in all these respects, that it may be our high privilege of suffering something further for the name of Christ, for his cause, and for his brethren.

As we reckon the profit and loss sides of the account for the year, let us be thankful that amongst the shortcomings which all may have to deplore none of *us* find one item of evil which the Apostle mentions; *viz.*, none of *us* "count the blood of the covenant, wherewith we were sanctified, an unholy [ordinary] thing." Thank God, we still appreciate the precious blood of Christ; we still appreciate the fact that we are accepted, not in any merit or worthiness of our own, but in him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood. Oh, how much we have to be thankful for in this one feature of our experience, even if, as we look back, we find that there have been vacillations or slips or slidings in the pathway! How much we may thank the Lord, that by his grace we still are what we are, and still have the opportunity of persevering and running with renewed zeal and patience the race set before us,--looking unto Jesus for our example.

HOW THE LORD IS ACCOUNTING RESPECTING US.

Finally, in our account of matters, let us take courage from the Lord's statement respecting how he counts things, and let us count accordingly. The Apostle said himself, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he *counted me faithful*, putting me into the ministry." (*I Tim. 1:12*.) Ah, yes, what a blessed satisfaction it is to us to know that while the Lord knows of our every word and every deed he is pleased to count us something different, even from our words and our deeds--something better! Our words do not always represent the full sentiments of our hearts; our conduct does not come up to the standard: after the words have been spoken and after the deeds have been done--perhaps to the very best of our ability--we realize that they have come short of the glory of God, and short of our own ideals, desires and efforts. How consoling it is to us, then, to know that our imperfect work shall be acceptable through Christ to God; that the Lord *counts* us according to our intentions, according to our wills. Praise his name! We would have no hope of coming up to any standard of perfection which he would approve, were it not for his gracious arrangement by which our imperfections are covered by our Redeemer's perfection and sacrifice, and our works accepted according to the intentions and desires of our hearts.

The Apostle rejoiced that by the Lord's counting him according to his intentions, and not according to his

deeds, he was counted worthy a place in the ministry. Let us similarly rejoice, and let us remember that the word "ministry" signifies service, and the word "minister" signifies servant. Let us remember that all of the Royal Priesthood, all of the truly consecrated Church of God, are ministers, servants of God and of each other. The Lord has put us all into the ministry; and there is a ministry, a service of kindness and of love toward the Lord, in honoring his name and declaring his righteousness; and a ministry toward the brethren, in opening the eyes of their understanding and enabling them to appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Lord's character. A share in this ministry belongs to each one of us, and it is a great privilege. It is a ministry, or service which, if neglected, or in proportion as neglected, brings us corresponding loss in spiritual progress and character. Let us count this privilege a valuable asset, to carry over into the new year, to be used with greater diligence than ever in the service of our King.

The Apostle, in writing to the Church at Thessalonica (*2 Thes. 1:5*), says, "That ye may be *counted* worthy of the Kingdom for which ye also suffer." Ah, yes; this is more of the Lord's counting. We are not worthy of the Kingdom of God. No human being is worthy; but the Lord purposes to *count* his faithful ones worthy. He will do this through the merit of his own great atonement-sacrifice which permits the acceptance of our wills, our intentions, as instead of the perfect works of righteousness. Thank God for this generous accounting! Let it encourage us, and let us remember the Apostle's statement that those who will be counted of our Lord thus fit for the Kingdom, will be such as suffer something for it. Let us then strive in a reasonable, rational manner, according to the divine Word and plan, to suffer for the Kingdom's sake.

We are not to seek suffering in a foolish way, by doing foolish things. We have no such example in our Lord's case, nor in the case of the apostles. It is not even necessary that we should suffer martyrdom or physical persecution. Possibly the extent of our sufferings may be the wounding of our feelings, when--"The workers of iniquity...whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the innocent." (*Psa. 64:3*.) Perhaps our sufferings, even, will be still less than this, as the Apostle explains (*Heb. 10:33-35*): "Partly whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became *companions of them that were so used.*" Let us resolve to carry this good asset over into the new year, rejoicing that we have been privileged thus far to suffer some little for the

Lord's sake and for the sake of the truth, and in companionship with the brethren; heeding the Apostle's words, "Cast not away, therefore, your *confidence*, which hath great recompense of reward." God wishes us to trust him according to his promises, and will reward such faith.

We conclude this exhortation to spiritual accounting, by calling attention to the Apostle's words: "We pray always for you--that God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." (*2 Thess. 1:11*.) This is our prayer for you, beloved in the Lord; and we trust also that this is your prayer for us. What more could we ask than that the Lord would count us worthy of the great high-calling of this Gospel age,--to joint-heirship with his Son in the Kingdom? We have his assurance respecting the terms on which he will count us worthy. We realize that the terms are very reasonable indeed, and that what we do sacrifice in conforming to those terms would be really only as loss and dross to us, so long as we were filled with a proper zeal for the Lord and his cause. And now notice the Apostle's words, that these good things which our heavenly Father has called us to receive--to prove ourselves worthy of receiving, according to his gracious terms in Christ --are not things which he offers us grudgingly, but things which he is well pleased to bestow. There was a time, perhaps, with each of us, when, under misinterpretations of the Lord's Word, we supposed that coldly and heartlessly, our Heavenly Father preferred not to give many blessings, and would give them to but few, and to them in a grudging manner, because impelled thereto by Jesus; and that for the great majority he had determined, beforehand, that they should be delivered over to devils for an eternity of misery. Thank God for a clearer opening of the eyes of our understanding, by which now we may know him as our Father, and appreciate to some extent his wonderful plan!

And, as respects our own share, let us settle it in our hearts that these gracious things to which we are called are "*all the good pleasure of his goodness.*" Let us start into the new year with good courage, remembering that if God loved us while we were yet sinners, strangers, aliens, foreigners, much more does he now love us since we have come into relationship with him through Jesus Christ our Lord;--since we are seeking to walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; since we are seeking to be copies of his dear Son, our Lord; since we have been begotten by his holy spirit. Truly, faith may confidently exclaim, "All things are ours, for we are Christ's and Christ is God's!"

=====

Chapter 7: One Day Before the Crucifixion: The Memorial

Matthew 26: 17-20

26:17 Now the first [day] of the [feast of] unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

26:18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

26:19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

26:20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

Luke 22:7-71

22:7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

22:8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

22:9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

22:10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

22:11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

22:12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

22:13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

22:14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

22:15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

22:16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

22:17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide [it] among yourselves:

22:18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake [it], and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup [is] the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

22:21 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me [is] with me on the table.

22:22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

22:23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

22:24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

22:25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

22:26 But ye [shall] not [be] so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

22:27 For whether [is] greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? [is] not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

22:28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

22:29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

22:31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired [to have] you, that he may sift [you] as wheat:

22:32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

22:33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

22:34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

22:35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

22:36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take [it], and likewise [his] scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

22:37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

22:38 And they said, Lord, behold, here [are] two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

22:39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

22:40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

22:41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,
22:42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.
22:43 [[And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.]]
22:44 [[And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.]]
22:45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,
22:46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.
22:47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.
22:48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?
22:49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?
22:50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.
22:51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.
22:52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?
22:53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.
22:54 Then took they him, and led [him], and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.
22:55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.
22:56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.
22:57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.
22:58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.
22:59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this [fellow] also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.
22:60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.
22:61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.
22:62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.
22:63 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote [him].
22:64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?
22:65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.
22:66 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,
22:67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:
22:68 And if I also ask [you], ye will not answer [[me, nor let [me] go.]]
22:69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.
22:70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.
22:71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

John 13: 5, 14, 15

13:5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe [them] with the towel wherewith he was girded.
13:14 If I then, [your] Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.
13:15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

WASHING ONE ANOTHER'S FEET.

JOHN 13:1-14.--APRIL 30.

Golden Text:--"By love serve one another."--Gal. 5:13.

OUR lessons can only be properly understood by taking note of the surroundings. The feast at Bethany, followed by our Lord's triumphal entry on the ass amid the shoutings of the multitude, his several days' preaching in the Temple to large crowds, and the coming of the Greeks to inquire for him, all seemed to indicate a growing popularity; and the disciples, thoroughly unable to comprehend the Master's declaration that he was shortly to be put to death by the chief priests, were full of ambitious thoughts respecting the future--respecting their identity with the Lord, and how his exaltation as a king would bring them into prominence and honor with him, as well as confer upon them the coveted opportunity of accomplishing a large amount of good, blessing a larger number of people, etc.

The thirteenth of Nisan apparently was spent by our Lord in quiet retirement, and the evening following, beginning the fourteenth, was the time appointed for the celebration of the Passover Supper in the upper room. Some of the apostles had, by the Lord's instruction, made ready beforehand; and now, as they assembled without a host to appoint them their places at the Supper, a discussion as to their prominence and their rights to the most honorable places, nearest to the Master, is not surprising. Our Lord twice before had rebuked them on this very line, assuring them that unless they cultivated and attained a spirit of meekness like little children they could have no part in the Kingdom. And only a week before, while en route to Jerusalem, James and John had made the request that in the Kingdom, when established, they might sit the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the Master, in closest proximity to his person. It was this spirit that controlled on this occasion, and led up to our Lord's washing of the disciples' feet as a lesson of humility and willingness to serve one another even in the humblest capacity.

SELFISHNESS EVEN IN LOVE

Nor are we to think of the apostles as each striving for the highest position merely from a selfish standpoint. Rather we should suppose that Peter, James and John, whom the Lord had in various ways specially favored in times past and who seemed to be specially close to him, loved the positions nearest his person, not merely because of the honor thus implied, but largely because of their love and esteem for the Master himself, and perhaps with the feeling that they appreciated this privilege more than some others could appreciate the same. Indeed we may suppose that a considerable number of the other apostles strove on their behalf,

insisting that they should have the most honorable position. But however we view the matter, it is evident that a wrong spirit had been engendered, one very inappropriate to the occasion, especially inappropriate to the Memorial Supper which our Lord intended to institute after the Passover Supper.

It is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly and hence we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err rather on the side of too great sympathy and leniency than on the side of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the apostles been inquired of respecting the matter they would have denied any elements of selfishness in their motives and conduct, and would have thought and spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and desire to be near him. This illustrates to us, what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful-- that it needs scrutinizing carefully lest, under the cloak of something good, it might harbor qualities which without that cloak we would despise or spurn.

As further illustrating this subject, and as helping us each and all to apply the lesson personally, we relate a dream told by a Scotch minister, Horatius Bonar, shortly before his death. He dreamed that his zeal was represented in a package of considerable size and weight, and that some angels came to it and weighed it and assured him that it was full weight, an hundred pounds--all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyze it. They put it into a crucible and tested it in various ways and then reported the result thus: "Fourteen parts selfishness; fifteen parts sectarianism; twenty-two parts ambition; twenty-three parts love to man; twenty-six parts love to God." Awakening he realized that it was but a dream, yet felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it throughout the remainder of life. That dream may be equally profitable to each of us in leading us to a close inspection of the motives which lie beyond our words and thoughts and doings--especially beyond our service for the Lord and for the brethren.

The first verse of our lesson calls attention to our Lord's love as the basis of all his dealings with "his own." Because of his love he laid aside his glory and became a man; because of his love he devoted himself as the man Christ Jesus; because of his love he was now anxious to help his dear disciples over a difficulty which, if not conquered, would hinder their usefulness as his followers both in the present and future. This

love not only led our Lord to administer the reproof necessary, but led him to do it in the wisest and best and kindest manner. His example in this respect should be observed and copied by all his followers, especially those who in any public capacity or service are his representatives in the Church.

Had our Lord and his disciples been the guests of some host on this occasion, it would have been considered the duty of the host to have sent some menial to wash their feet. This was the custom of the country, and very necessary to comfort. The open sandals or imperfectly sewed shoes allowed the dust of the highway to soil the feet, and really made washing a necessity after every journey, but particularly on a festal occasion of this kind. As the Lord's company were not guests, but merely had the use of the room, no servant appeared to wash their feet, and it would have been properly the duty and custom for one of the number to have performed the menial service for the others. As we have just seen, however, the spirit of rivalry was warm in their hearts, and no one volunteered to render the service, nor had any one the right to demand it in a company in which the Lord had made no special rank and appointed none as menials. This, however, rightly understood and appreciated, would have left the greater opportunity for some of them to have volunteered this service to the others. What an opportunity they all lost!

A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY LOST

Our Lord apparently let the matter go to the full limit to see whether or not any of them would improve the opportunity and make himself servant of all: he waited until the supper was being served (not ended, as in our common version;) then arising from the table he laid aside his outer garment or mantle and took a towel and girded himself--that is to say, tightened the girdle worn around the waist, which would hold up the flowing under-garments and keep them out of the way of his activity. We can well imagine the consternation of the apostles as they watched this procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one and another as they protruded from the couches on which they reclined (as illustrated in a previous lesson). The method of washing feet was different from ours: the basin was merely a receptacle for holding the soiled water, the water being poured from the pitcher in a small stream while the foot was being washed, rubbed, rinsed.

Apparently the apostles were so astonished at our Lord's procedure, and so felt the condemnation which his course implied, that they knew not what to say, and so silence reigned until it came Peter's turn. Peter had a peculiar combination of character, part of which was extremely good. He objected to having his feet washed by the Lord, saying, "Dost thou wash my feet?--It is not

appropriate, Lord, that one so great as you should serve a person of my standing, a poor fisherman." But our Lord answered that although Peter did not discern the full meaning of the matter, he would explain to him later when he had finished the washing of all. Peter's second remark was less praiseworthy than his first. He said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet."

It was hard for Peter to realize that he was the disciple and the Lord was the Teacher,--that it was for him to obey and not to dictate; but Jesus' answer, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," at once brought out the better side of Peter's impulsive nature. If his washing had anything to do with his nearness to the Master and his relationship to him, then he wanted it. Going even to the other extreme again, fearing to leave matters in the Lord's care, he cried, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." There is a lesson for us in this matter: We are not to dictate to the Lord, not to attempt to be wise or good or obedient in ways that he has not directed. This is a hard lesson for some dispositions to learn,--continually they want to do more than is written in the Scriptures. Such a course indicates either a lack of reverence for the Lord and his Word and the wisdom thereof, or else a too great self-confidence, too much self-esteem. A humble and trustful heart should learn to say, Thy will, O, Lord, thy way and in thy time--"Thy will, not mine be done."

WASHING THE FEET OF THE BATHED

Our Lord's answer in our common version is somewhat obscure; the revised version is better--he that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet to be clean every whit. Properly they had all bathed in accordance with the Jewish requirement of the putting away of all filth at the beginning of the Passover season. Our Lord's intimation, then, signified that having bathed they merely now needed the rinsing of their feet, the cleansing of the members that had come in contact with the earth. Our Lord added, referring to Judas, "Ye are clean, but not all." This expression shows us clearly that he had in mind a higher cleansing, of which this washing of their feet and their previous bath were but figures.

The Lord knew that the hearts of his disciples were loyal. He had accepted them as his disciples and had reckonedly imputed to them the merit of his sacrifice as a covering of their blemishes, the full testimony of which would be given them by and by at Pentecost, the holy Spirit testifying that the Father had accepted the Lord's atoning sacrifice on their behalf. But there was one in the number whose heart was not clean. Our Lord did not pass him by, but washed the feet of Judas with the rest, knowing the while of his perfidy, and

that he had already bargained with the chief priests, and was merely awaiting the opportune moment for the carrying out of his malevolent scheme.

Our Lord's words, although not understood by the rest, must have been appreciated by Judas, as were also his subsequent words recorded in *verses 18,26,27,28*. Our Lord went so far as to quote the very prophecy which marked Judas and his disloyalty, his violation of even the common hospitality. None of these things moved Judas; none of these things appealed to his heart in such a manner as to change his course. We have thus strong evidence of the willful intention which marked his crime and enforced the meaning of our Lord's words when he called him the "son of perdition," and declared that it would have been better for him that he had never been born. The quotation from the Psalm was, "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

PATIENCE TO ITS LIMIT

We may be sure that our Lord's conduct in dealing with Judas is not only a proper outline of what our conduct should be to any of a similar class, but additionally we should note the lesson that the Lord is long suffering toward all who become his disciples, not willing that any should perish, but disposed to do for them until the very last, and to bring to their attention the error of their ways repeatedly, in hope that thus they may be turned therefrom. The latter lesson has associated with it the thought that those who have received the Truth, and who in spite of all the favors connected therewith encourage and develop in themselves the spirit of selfishness, are apt to become so hardened, so calloused, that not even the Master's reproofs and the words of the Scriptures will influence them. This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance"--to a proper course--if once the Spirit of the Lord has been fully subjected to the spirit of selfishness in their hearts.

In harmony with what he told Peter--that he should know later on the significance of the washing--our Lord explained the matter after he had gone the rounds of all the apostles. He said, "Know [understand] ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S ACTION

Here we have the entire lesson explained. In their fear to be the least, all the disciples had shunned the opportunity of service for the Master and for each other. Our Lord, their acknowledged Head and Master, the Messiah, had humbled himself to serve them all, and had thus rebuked their inhumility, and at the same time set

them an example that would apply to every affair of life, namely, that they should be glad to serve one another on every proper occasion, in the high things or in the common affairs of life. This washing of one another's feet we may readily see applies to any and every humble service of life, any and every kindness, though specially to those services and kindnesses which would be along the lines of spiritual assistances and comfort.

From this standpoint it will be seen that we do not understand that our Master here enjoined a form or ceremony as our Dunkard friends and others believe. We do not even see in the matter the groundwork for the custom of the pope of Rome, who once every year, at this season washes the feet of twelve poor men, perhaps beggars, who are first prepared by a general washing and then brought in while the pope performs the special public service in the washing of their feet. We see no such formality in our Lord's intention. Indeed so far from it being a comfort or necessity to literally wash feet in our day and under our conditions, the reverse would be true. On the contrary, the Apostle points out, to wash the saints' feet in olden times was a mark of special hospitality, and entitled the performer to a loving respect in the Church.--*1 Tim. 5:10*.

How many blessed opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling one another and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of life, or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life. As our Golden Text expresses it, we are in love to serve one another and not through formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, we may be sure has the divine approval and blessing. Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example; let us, like our Master, not merely assume humility or pretend it, but actually have that humility which will permit us to do kindness and services to all with whom we come in contact, and proportionately enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Lord's body--the Church.

As our Lord said to the disciples, "He that is bathed need not save to wash his feet," even so we may realize that all who are justified and consecrated members of his body have already had the bath, the washing of regeneration, and are already clean through the word spoken unto them. (*John 15:3*.) Nevertheless, although thus cleansed and sanctified, so long as we are in contact with the world we are liable to a certain degree of earthly defilement, and it especially behooves each one not only to look out for himself but to help one another to get rid of earthly defilements, thus serving his brethren, helping them in

the weaknesses, trials and imperfections of the flesh, assisting them to become overcomers. In these respects he is cooperating in the great work of washing the saints' feet, cleansing from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord.--2 Cor. 7:1.

Z '05, 136-140; R3551

I PRAY FOR THEM.

--JOHN 17:15-26.--MAY 14.--

ON the night of the institution of the memorial of his death, our Lord, so far from being concerned wholly with himself and his approaching crucifixion, was specially thinking of and praying for his disciples. The closing verse of *John 16* records his words of admonition, "These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven in prayer for his disciples, saying, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me."

Our Lord's entire life furnishes an illustration of what the Apostle commends to all the Church in the words, "Pray without ceasing." Our Lord evidently was always in that prayerful attitude of heart, which was filled with thankfulness to the Father in respect to all of life's affairs, which recognized his guardian care, which trusted him, confided in him and in every distressing circumstance looked to him to overrule and to cause all experiences to work for good. But our Lord's constant attitude of prayer without ceasing did not hinder his more particular devotions when he turned aside from the affairs of life to speak to the Father in secret--sometimes briefly and sometimes spending a whole night in prayer in the mountain solitude. Though he loved his disciples they were not yet begotten of the Holy Spirit and could not fully comprehend matters from his standpoint. The Father alone was able to comprehend the full situation, and hence the very isolation of our Lord from all human help drew him the nearer and the oftener to the Father in prayer.

So it is or should be with the Lord's followers. Proportionately as we grow in his character likeness we will similarly pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, realizing him as the center of all our hopes and ambitions and joys. And similarly we will avail ourselves of the privilege of more formal approaches to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to

help in time of need. Similarly also, in proportion as at times we may find that our dear ones either of earthly or spiritual relationship are unable to sympathize with our experiences, we may be profited by such a lack of earthly sympathy in that the experiences will send us the more frequently to the heavenly Comforter from whom we will derive the greater blessing and joy.

THE CHURCH NOT THE WORLD

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.

The world has appropriated some of the promises and customs and ceremonies which more or less resemble or counterfeit the graces of the Church, and this is called civilization, and thus a large proportion of the world are to-day mistakenly recognized as part of the Church. This is to their disadvantage, for not discerning that those who are of the Church must be begotten again, that in the resurrection they may be born again, they are merely deceiving themselves. It is a disadvantage also to the true Church, the true followers of the Lord, whose new natures must contend with the weaknesses of the flesh, and whose flesh seeks to justify itself by common custom, and to claim that to go much beyond the common standard is to be fanatical, extremists. The Lord's people need to remember that, judged from the standpoint of the world and the nominal Church, they must be extremists if they would come up to the standards set for them by the Lord and the apostles--standards illustrated in the lives of Jesus and the apostles, in their self-denials even unto death.

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.

WHAT HE DID NOT PRAY FOR

As we look out over the world to-day and take a view of the nominal Christian Church, and attempt to put ourselves in the place of the nominal Christian believer and his professed view of matters, and if, then, we suppose that the Lord prayed for the present condition of things, his prayer would be something like this:

I pray that my followers may become very numerous, very wealthy and very learned, that they may be the notables of the world. I pray that they may be divided up into great denominations, some holding one fragment of truth and some another, blending the same with much of inconsistency and error. I pray that there may be a dignified class, self-satisfied and reverential in form, who may be known as Episcopalians. I pray for another dignified class who will hold the Westminster Confession of Faith, and subsequently in 1902 supplement it with a briefer statement which, in effect, will contradict it. I pray for another great schism under the leadership of Wesley, which shall mingle with its devotions many worldly customs and attractions, and shall prosper greatly and be able to boast the building of one church every day in the year. I pray for another great sect or party of my followers, to name my name and be the followers of Luther. I pray for the great Roman Catholic Church, which will claim to be my kingdom, claim to reign in power and great dignity and honor over the kingdoms of the earth, claim that its head and representative is my vicegerent, the spiritual emperor of the world. I pray that its cunning policy may keep my Word from reaching the public, and that it may represent my great sacrifice for sins in its innumerable sacrifices of the mass, and that it may prosper and "wear out the saints of the most high God."

I pray also for all the little sects and parties and splits, that they may prosper, that each may think that they have the truth and be satisfied with their creeds, and be hindered from searching the Scriptures to know therefrom the way, the truth and the life. I pray for all these that they may be thus scattered and separated and have fences between each other. I pray further that they may not only have denominational lines to separate

them, but, additionally, political lines and lines of national prejudice, so that millions of them of one party or nationality may threaten and make war upon and slaughter those of another nationality or party. I pray that these national distinctions amongst them shall run so high that it will require hundreds of millions of dollars every year for armies and weapons and battleships to fight each other or to threaten each other or to intimidate each other. I pray all this that the heathen world may be charmed with the glorious effect of my teachings upon Christendom, and that all the heathen may say with one voice, Let us also become partisan and sectarian. Let us also arm and fight. Let us also learn of the practices of these Christian nations that they do not have the entire monopoly of profanity and drunkenness and debauchery, that we may share in these.

WHAT OUR LORD DID PRAY FOR

Very different was our Lord's petition. His prayer represents his disciples as being a small minority in the world, hated of the world, opposed by the world, misunderstood by the world, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble-- chiefly the poor and altogether a "little flock." The characteristics of the disciples whom Jesus personally gathered were to be expected in all who should afterward be gathered to him as his true followers.

Notwithstanding the great array of Christian nations and Christian sects, the Lord "knoweth them that are his;" and in harmony with this prayer he has not during the age separated his people from the world, but left them in the world, merely separating them so far as the heart is concerned--"I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." We are not to say that the evil is good, we are not to say that the world has become saintly; it is still evil. Christendom is practically in the same condition to-day that Judaism was in when it crucified the Lord and persecuted his followers.

Then the chief sect of the Jews called themselves God's holy people (the meaning of the word Pharisee), and the whole nation stood on a plane of outward morality which the Lord declared was in his sight a farce. He called the leaders whited sepulchers, inwardly full of corruption. He told them that while they washed the outside of the cup they left it filthy within; that while they made broad their phylacteries and prayed in public, in their hearts they were far from a condition of holiness or love--so far that they would be willing to wrongfully take a home from a poor widow if the outward forms of the law permitted and if the transaction would not bring too much reproach. (*Matt. 23:14,23-28.*) It is much the same to-day; there is an outward gloss or veneer that in many cases is

hypocritical, an outward form of worship, a drawing near with the lips while the heart is far from him, busy with fashion and dress and pleasure and money-making idolatries, if not with grosser sins.

Our Lord prayed that his true followers might be kept by heavenly power free from such conditions--out of sympathy with them, not of them. And we believe this has been true all down throughout this Gospel age. We believe that the Lord's prayer has been fulfilled, and that his scattered little flock, the branches of the true vine, have flourished in heart, spiritually, keeping up a separate life entirely from the nominal system, which is only a part of the world. We believe that the same is true to-day, and that these in the world but not of it are now, in the harvest time, being called out of Babylon, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." But as the entire number of Israelites who returned from Babylon when the opportunity offered was only about 50,000, so we may expect here that the Lord has so arranged matters respecting the popularity of error and the unpopularity of the Truth, that the number ready and glad to forsake all to follow the Truth and the right will be few.

"SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH"

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.

We are aware that "doctrine" has become very unpopular in every quarter of the world and in the nominal Church. No wonder! The doctrines, the creeds, of the various sects and parties of Christendom are so mingled with error, so offensive to the spiritual senses of the spiritual mind, that they could have no pleasure in partaking of such things from their tables. The prophet describes the matter, saying, "All tables are full of vomit"--every creed formulated in the Dark Ages is necessarily repulsive to-day. But the Truth, "Thy Word is Truth," never becomes stale, never becomes rancid or offensive; it is still the Bread from Heaven, it is still the Word of Life; and all who are of the Truth, all who have progressed from being merely babes in Christ and by partaking of the meat of his Word have come to an appreciation of it, all who have been weaned from the

milk and drawn from the breasts, can say with the poet respecting the wonderful story of the divine plan,

"IT SATISFIES MY LONGINGS AS NOTHING ELSE CAN DO"

The Truth has a sanctifying power in the heart because it fills the longings of the heart. Every heart has talents and appeals which demand operation, activity. Something must be supplied to meet the hungerings and thirstings of these various talents and qualities of the mind. If the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word be not received into the heart to satisfy its cravings or longings, it will feed upon other things; and the world, the flesh and the devil are all crowding upon it, offering various attractions, some of which will be received if the heart be not filled and kept filled. Thus our Lord's parable represents a heart swept and garnished, with the devil cast out, and then that heart, still empty, is represented as being re-entered by seven devils. Our hearts need not only to be cleansed from sin through justification of life, through faith in Christ, but they need also to be filled with the Lord himself; and our Lord, who calls himself the Truth, furnishes to our hearts various truths as food, as nourishment, as filling our hearts and satisfying our cravings, and by thus filling he sanctifies those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and thus separates them completely and keeps them separate from the world, its spirit, its hopes, its aims, its ambitions.

GOD'S POWER IN GOD'S TIME

Have we love for righteousness? We cannot hope to find it in the world, nor hope to establish it here under present conditions. We are obliged to admit that nothing short of God's promised Kingdom can establish righteousness; hence our hearts, as Noah's dove, return to the Lord as the center and fountain of righteousness. Have we a desire for peace and joy? Our past experience in the world convinces us that, while the whole world is seeking for happiness, it has not found it. We who have found the Lord have found the secret of happiness, the Christian's secret of having every day a happy one. Do we long for power and influence that we may exercise them for good? The Word of Truth assures us that it is impossible to find them in present conditions, but that we shall, if faithful, attain to the power and glory, honor and immortality, in the First Resurrection, and that then our grandest hopes and ideals will be realized in the Kingdom blessings that will come to all the families of the earth. Do riches seem attractive to us? The Scriptures hold out the true riches, and assure us that in following the Lord all things are ours by faith now, and shall be actually ours by and by, when we become our Master's associates in the heavenly Kingdom.

Our Lord declares, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." It is evident enough how the Father sent the Son, who left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was made flesh and dwelt amongst us; but in what sense are we sent into the world, we who are born of the world? Of course the apostles were specially sent once, but all the Lord's followers are sent in a sense or degree. We are not sent until we are separated from the world to be his in heart and in truth. Then he gave us a commission or a message, a work to do in the world in his name and for the cause which he represents, namely, the cause of righteousness. So, then, the true followers of the Lord are ambassadors for God, representatives for Jesus. As he was in the world, so are we in the world; hence he calls upon us to walk as children of the light, to oppose sin in ourselves, and to use our influence in all proper ways in opposition to sin and in favor of righteousness and truth and right.

GLORY SHARED WITH CHURCH

Continuing our Lord declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." This seems to carry with it the thought, elsewhere suggested in this prayer, that our Lord had by this time come to a full realization of the Father's plan, namely, that his disciples were to be developed for the purpose of becoming his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, sharers in his glory. At first thought such a sharing of the great glory of the Kingdom might appear to be a lessening of the great glory of Jesus, just as the appointment of the seventy elders of Israel to be associates with Moses in judging Israel seemed at first to be a contraction or diminution of the dignity or authority of Moses.

But as Moses in the type was very meek, and gladly welcomed all the elders to joint-service, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!" (*Num. 11:29*), so the Lord Jesus, so far from feeling that the gathering out of the Church to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom would diminish his glory, joined heartily in the divine plan, and declares here that he set himself apart, he separated himself from that feature of the glory and dignity of the Father's reward that his followers might have a share in it, that they might become his joint-heirs, being set apart and brought to this honor through the Truth, through the great and precious promises bestowed upon them. This same thought seems to be presented in the words (*vs. 22,23*) --"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

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. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained.

"THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE"

The spirit of trusts and combinations which is abroad in the world and which is permeating everything has the effect of combining congregations, combining denominations, and in general is leading on rapidly to the formation of great religious trusts, whose development will be a serious menace to the liberties of the Lord's truly consecrated people, but not an injury to their spiritual interests. On the contrary, it will prove a blessing to the Lord's little flock in that it will more particularly differentiate them and confirm to them the teachings of the Scriptures, separating them the more completely from the nominal systems and the binding in bundles of the tares, giving them the while the confirmations of the Scriptures, which clearly predict this condition in the end of this age as preceding the collapse of great Babylon.--*Rev. 18:21*.

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 to-day, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord's. They know each other not by outward passwords or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love one for another." "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity, but, as the Apostle explains, "especially the household of faith," especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to him and, so far as they are able, doing his will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

This union between those who are the Lord's people is evidently not the union of person. The Lord's followers are not one in person but in spirit. And this is the illustration which the Lord gives of the oneness which exists between himself and the Father--they are not one in person but one in spirit, purpose, will; for our Lord declares that he always does the Father's will, those things which are pleasing in the Father's sight. And thus we abide in his love and abide in him by doing his will, which is the Father's will, and thus Father and Son and the Church, the Bride, are all one--in spirit and in truth.

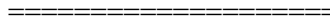
WITH CHRIST, SHARING HIS GLORY

Our Lord's words (v. 24), "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me go with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." 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.



OUR LORD BETRAYED AND DENIED

--JOHN 18:1-27.--MAY 17.--

Golden Text:--"Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men."--Matt. 17:22.

TODAY'S lesson constitutes one of the saddest chapters in history. It reveals to us the depths of human ingratitude, selfishness, weakness, and fear to a remarkable degree. Nevertheless, it is a most helpful lesson to those who are in the right attitude of heart to receive it, because it warns against weaknesses more or less common to all and against dangers to which all are exposed. It emphasizes our Lord's words to the twelve apostles, words which are applicable also to all of his followers--"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." And in respect to the Apostle Peter's experience and our Lord's magnanimity in dealing with him, the lesson gives encouragement to others who, like Peter, have strayed from the right path unwisely.

To get the proper bearings of this lesson we go back to the early hours of the same evening when Jesus and his chosen twelve met to eat the Passover Supper. For three years our Lord had been training those twelve men, preparing them to be his representatives in the world, his mouthpieces to the Church. They had seen his power, known his teachings and themselves had exercised the power of healing and casting out devils, his power operating through them. He had been on the alert to instruct them as to the need of humility; that they must become as little children, simple, earnest and obedient in order to be fitted for the Kingdom which they were called to share with him. On several occasions he had been obliged to call to their attention the necessity for meekness and humility, as he perceived the spirit of ambition and rivalry amongst them. On this last evening which he would spend with them in the flesh he had noted with regret that when assembling for the Passover Supper they had neglected the usual hospitalities of the time not only toward each other but also toward him, their Leader, their Master whom they professed to believe was the special Son of God, the Messiah. They had neglected to wash one another's feet and his feet, a custom, almost a necessity to comfort in that dusty land, where sandals are worn instead of shoes.

"I, YOUR LORD--SERVANT OF ALL"

Forgetful of his own weight of care and sorrow, and anxious for the welfare of his followers, Jesus improved the opportunity to teach them all a great lesson in humility. He took water in a basin and a towel and did the feet-washing, while the disciples, ashamed, confused, knew not what to say or do under the circumstances, except Peter, who protested that he could not thus have the Master act as his servant; but when

Jesus explained that there was a symbolical meaning to the matter, Peter also was anxious for the washing. Lest they should fail to get the lesson, our Lord, after he had finished, explained it, saying, If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, have displayed humility and willingness to serve any of you in the most menial capacity, you surely ought to be willing to follow the same example with one another, and to perform the most menial service for one another, even to the extent of washing one another's feet, as opportunity may offer.

It was not long before this that Jesus, talking to the apostles, told them plainly that he would be delivered up to the authorities and that the disciples would all forsake him. This seemed a hard statement to the apostles; an intimation that Jesus lacked confidence in them, and it was the impulsive Peter who spoke up and declared that although all should deny the Lord and forsake him he would never do so. It was then that our Lord prophetically told him that before the second cock crowing at night he would deny his Master, and assured him that Satan desired to capture him, but that he was praying for him that his faith would not fail. Surely these statements were of value to the Apostle in his hour of temptation; surely they helped to put all the apostles on guard against what was to be expected.

"LORD, IS IT I? LORD, IS IT I?"

Proceeding further in his cautioning our Lord declared, "Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me!" What consternation must have prevailed! Could it be that amongst those who were so highly favored of the Lord and so long associated with him there could be one so base as to deny his Lord?

Let us not lose the force of this lesson; let us remember that the Lord's disciples down through the Gospel Age have been as the Apostle here declares of the twelve, "Men of like passions with you," men from the common walks of life, neither above nor below the average standard of human imperfection! Let us remember that the same Lord who cautioned those twelve respecting the trials coming upon them is still mindful of his Church, his flock, and we may suppose especially mindful of all who are in any prominent place of responsibility amongst the brethren. He still guards us, warns us, seeks to keep us from falling under the power of the Adversary. He still prays for his faithful, those who at heart are loyal to him, but who have weaknesses of the flesh which are liable to make their temptations more severe. As our Lord's

interest in and efforts for the apostles increased as they neared the special hour of their temptation, so we may be sure that it is also with respect to his Church in general today, when the last members of his Body, the "feet of him," are approaching the crucial hour, "The hour of temptation that cometh upon the whole world to try them."--*Rev. 3:10*.

The Master does not speak to us in audible tones, as he did to those twelve, but has he not spoken to us with equal force and earnestness? Do not the words and actions of the Lord to those disciples come to us today with the same lesson and with as much force as they bore to them? Have we not, in addition to these examples and warnings, special declarations of the Scriptures respecting the end of the age? Did not our Lord, in the parable of the suitable and unsuitable fish, explain to us that in the end of this Gospel Age there would be a separation of those in the Gospel net? Does he not again in the parable of the wheat and tares tell us of the separation due to take place in the harvest time of this Gospel Age, when only the true and the ripe wheat will be gathered into the barn? Does he not through the Apostle forewarn us that in the end of the age perilous times shall come because men will be lovers of their own selves--selfish, ambitious-- lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God? (*2 Tim. 3:1,2*.) Does he not tell us that it would be at the time in the divine plan when God would send [permit] strong delusions, so that all might believe a lie who shall not have received the truth in the love of it and with zeal? --*2 Thess. 2:11*.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION THAT SHALL TRY"

Does he not also tell us that the temptations of this hour will be such as would, if it were possible, deceive the "very Elect," but that in their case it will not be possible because of their love, their zeal and the consequent blessings and privileges that divine favor will provide for them! And if to Peter special encouragement was given--"I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not"--have we not a full equivalent of this in the Scriptural assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway," "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in your weakness"? (*Matt. 28:30; 2 Cor. 12:9*.) Surely we have much advantage every way over the apostles in their trial, and this advantage is emphasized in the fact that their trial came upon them before their anointing with the holy Spirit, whereas our testings come to us at the time we are of the anointed Body. When we now look out into the future and hear the message, "The morning cometh, but a night also" (*Isa. 21:12*), we may well be forewarned as to what to expect in that short night of trouble which will affect the consecrated followers before it reaches the world in general. We must expect in this hour of trial that "a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it

shall not come nigh thee"; yet we must remember that this promise is limited to the class specified, to those who have made the Lord, even the Most High, their refuge and habitation; for no evil can come nigh their dwelling place. (*Psa. 91:7,9*.) Therefore, dearly beloved, putting on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day, we will need to watch unto prayer for ourselves and for those over whom the holy Spirit hath made us overseers, that we may feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with the blood of his own Son.--*Acts 20:28, Diaglott*.

As the eating of a meal together was a pledge of faithfulness, so for the Master to dip a special sop was a special mark of favor, and this was given to Judas at the supper to indicate the one who would betray the Lord. We can better imagine than describe how the apostles, in various tones, asked the Lord, "Is it I?" and how Judas likewise asked the same question! We can imagine the look of our Lord's eye as he gave him the sop, saying in action and look, Judas, why do you resist the loving kindnesses which I have bestowed upon you? You have professed to be my friend and disciple; I surely have done the part of a friend toward you. That glance and that sop should have overwhelmed the selfish Judas, but as the mercy of the Lord, in the taking away of the plagues from Pharaoh had so much the more hardened Pharaoh's heart, so every additional manifestation of our Lord's humility and kindness seems to have had the effect of hardening the heart of Judas. In answer to our Lord's glance and sop Judas, so far from repenting, was more embittered, more determined to carry out his program. It shone in his eye; our Lord read his thoughts and answered in the words, "What thou doest, do quickly."

Let us not lose the lesson in its application and bearing upon the Lord's people of today. If any amongst the consecrated are cultivating selfishness and personal ambition, they are preparing themselves for such a termination as that of Judas. The influence of the spirit they are cultivating will lead them further and further from sympathy with the Lord's cause and the faithful brethren until, like Judas, they shall be ready to sell the truth for a little personal advantage. And when such a condition of heart has been reached by those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, no power will hinder them from going to the limit of their evil course. Their minds become so poisoned against the truth that the very sops of favor animate them the more toward evil. As in Judas' case we read that then Satan entered into him, so with a similar class here; we may expect the Adversary to get fuller power and control over them.

THE LESSONS OF GETHSEMANE

One would think that the impressive lessons of that night would have so filled the minds of the apostles and made them so alert that sleep would have been far from their eyes. But not so; they scarcely understood how to take the Master's words; he had said so many remarkable things which they did not comprehend; it seemed so incomprehensible that he who had come to be the Messiah and reign should be betrayed and crucified, and that they whom he had promised should sit with him in his throne should all forsake him and flee. Hence the repeated instruction that they should watch and pray made little impression. Even the three special friends of Jesus, the ones whom he made his special confidants and took with him to the Mount of Transfiguration on another special occasion without the others--even these three slumbered, except as from time to time the Lord visited them and awakened them and they noted certain incidents which they recorded for us.

"LEST ANY ROOT OF BITTERNESS SPRING UP"

How is it now? The night of trouble nearing, the hour of trial that shall try all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth coming close, and with the many warnings of the Master through the Word that we should watch and pray lest we enter into temptation!--how is it with us? Alas! many of those who, like Peter, James and John, have been specially favored of the Lord, especially near to him, fail to realize the importance of the time in which we are living, fail to realize that the foretold temptations are about to come upon them and that, like Peter, they will be in great danger of being swept away, sifted out from amongst the Lord's faithful.

We can imagine our Lord's condition to some extent. His great hour of trial was upon him; he realized it to the full; it meant not only that his own faithfulness, past and present and on the day following, would decide respecting his loyalty to the Father and his right to obtain the high reward of glory, honor and immortality, but it meant additionally that the interests of the whole world of mankind were in the balance! Victory would mean eventually the deliverance of all the prisoners in bondage to sin and death; failure would mean the loss of everything! Can we wonder that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, and that in his intensity of feeling bloody perspiration oozed from his pores? Ah, dear Master! Well was it written of him, "Of the people there was none with me." Even his most intimate and most beloved disciples failed to appreciate the conditions and to render him the sympathetic aid which he craved. What would those disciples afterward not have given to have had back the opportunity of ministering to their Lord in his hour of trial! What a privilege they let slip! There is a lesson here for us also, for although the Master is not in the flesh and will suffer no more, some of his members

are still in the flesh, some who must suffer with him if they would reign with him. Our sufferings are not all just like those of the Master, nor are they just the same with each of us; each has his own experiences to prove, to test, to fit, to polish him that he may be made meet for the Master's use. Have we, each for the other, that sympathy, that yearning love which would lead us to help one another and to bear one another's burdens and thus to fulfil the Law of Christ, the Law of Love? or have we the Judas spirit to injure? or have we the spirit of slothful indifference and lack of appreciation which would lead us to slumber while the interests of others of the Body are at stake, while the brethren are suffering and are in trial? Our practical answer to these questions the Lord is looking for, and his love and his favor will be upon those who manifest most of his Spirit. To us much has been given, in that the hour of testing along these lines comes to us after we have received the anointing of the holy Spirit. Of us correspondingly more will be expected --"We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."

AN ANGEL MINISTERED UNTO HIM

When our Lord in his agony prayed the Father, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," we are not to suppose that he meant the cup of death, for he had already explained to his disciples that this death was necessary, and that he had come into the world for this very purpose. What, then, was the cup which he asked might pass from him? We reply that quite probably he referred to the particular ignominy which would be associated with his crucifixion; which would attach to his execution as a blasphemer against God and between two thieves. Another Scripture gives us to understand that the severity of our Lord's anguish was in respect to his own faithfulness, upon which depended his resurrection. If he failed in even one little item, one jot or tittle of the Law, his own life would have been condemned and forfeited as much as was Adam's and as a result he would have had no resurrection and no future life, and the whole work, for which he had come into the world, would have been a failure. The Scripture we refer to says, "Who in the days of his flesh offered up strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death. And he was heard in respect to the thing which he feared." Although none of his disciples gathered around him to assure him that he had been without spot and blemish and that every act of his life had been in full conformity to the divine will, God more than made up to him such encouragement by sending specially an angel, who ministered unto him, who served him in respect to the thing which he feared, who therefore must have given him assurance from the Father that he had been faithful, that he was approved.

On the strength of that assurance our Lord arose firm, calm, strong for all the coming events of that night and the next day up to the moment of his death. And so it should be with us: Properly there should be some anxiety in respect to the future; the Lord will not be pleased if we are careless as respects the matter of making our calling and election sure. We are to appreciate life, and particularly the life more abundant which has been promised to us if we prove faithful. We are so to appreciate this that our eyes will be toward the Lord for such ministrations of his love and favor as will give us assurance that we are still his and that the glorious hopes and promises are still ours. And his assurances or comfort may not come through earthly ministrations; the Lord himself will see to it that every member of his Body who is deeply earnest and anxious on the subject will have the proper witness of the Spirit, the proper testimony to his heart of his continued acceptance and faithfulness.

JESUS BETRAYED WITH A KISS

Treachery is universally despised and properly so, hence Satan, the traitor to God, and Judas, the traitor to our Lord Jesus, stand out prominently as representatives of that condition of mind and heart which should be shunned by all, the condition of heart which the Lord declares merits and shall have the Second Death, everlasting destruction. From the various Gospel records we find that Judas, leaving the company of the Lord and the eleven apostles, went again to the Chief Priests, with whom he had already been in conference. He finished the bargain and became the guide of a band of temple guards or temple policemen and their followers. These, armed with their clubs or maces, took with them lights needed for the searching of the foliage, although the moon was at its full. From the standpoint of the rulers the midnight hour was the most favorable because a large concourse of people then in Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover included many who knew Jesus and had been witnesses of his miracles and his arrest in day time might have led to a tumult. Our Lord probably went to the Garden because it belonged to a friend and because in the open his disciples would have a better opportunity for escape from arrest; though it does not appear that there was any special endeavor to make an arrest, except that mentioned by Mark of a young man who followed with the crowd as they led Jesus away and who had on a long, loose garment, and when they laid hold upon it he fled from them naked. This is supposed to have been John Mark, the writer of the Gospel of Mark, and that he lived on the premises of which the Gethsemane Garden was a part.

Our Lord's agony, prayer and comforting at an end, he returned to the apostles, saying, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." Your opportunity for watching with me or speaking a word of comfort has passed; your opportunity

for waking your own hearts and minds to prayer as a safeguard against coming trials and testings is past. Behold the band of those who will arrest me! A little ahead of the band came Judas, who indicated the Master by the traitorous kiss, which John, for very shame, did not record. Judas, finding his deception recognized as the Master said, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" left him and joined the band who had come for his arrest, while Jesus, coming out of the cover into the open, said, "Whom seek ye?" After he had answered their reply, saying, "I am he, let these my friends go their way," we read that the men went backward and fell on the ground. This was doubtless the result of a power our Lord exercised upon them, the power by which he might have resisted them entirely had he so desired. What he did was sufficient to show them and his apostles that his surrender was not one of necessity, but that the Father's will might be done.

Awhile before Jesus had said that they should have some swords, and, finding that there were two, he said they were enough. The Apostle Peter was evidently the bearer of one of these and as the armed men approached the Lord, Peter used the sword and smote off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest. This incident was evidently of the Lord's intention to show that his surrender was not because of cowardice on the part of the disciples or himself. It also furnished the opportunity of healing an enemy by our Lord's touch and the opportunity of saying to Peter, "Put up thy sword; they that take to the sword shall perish by the sword"; in other words, My followers are not to fight with carnal weapons, my Kingdom is not to be established in this manner.

Annas had been the High Priest for a number of years and had been followed in the office by several of his sons and now his son-in-law, Caiaphas, filled the position. Nevertheless, Annas in a certain sense was recognized and hence our Lord was first taken before him. Annas questioned him but did not attempt a judicial investigation. This was had before Caiaphas and apparently in another part of the palace of the High Priest.

It was apparently while our Lord was being examined by Annas that Peter, who warmed himself at the fire, was questioned three times respecting his identity with our Lord as one of his followers, and three times he denied and directly the cock crowing began. Peter heard it, and our Lord, while being led from the presence of Annas to the judgment seat of Caiaphas, looked upon Peter. What a sermon there was in the glance toward Peter! He who had boasted of his courage that he never would deny the Lord had failed. How much weaker he was than he had supposed! How the Lord's prophecy had come true, Before the second cock crowing thou shalt deny me thrice! He went out

and wept bitterly, sick at heart and thoroughly ashamed of himself, resolving, no doubt, that he would be less boastful in the future and do more of the watching and praying which the Master had enjoined.

We know not how close parallels to some of these experiences may lie before some of the Lord's dear people now. But let us hope that if any of us should come so sadly short of our own hopes and privileges that

the Master would not only pray for us, as he did for Peter, but that he would turn upon us also his glances of reproof, of chiding, and also such glances as would remind us of his sympathy and love that we might not be overwhelmed with our own sense of weakness and shame, but that our repentance, unlike that of Judas, should be like that of Peter, sincere and acceptable to the Lord.

Z ' 06, 346 – 349; R3885

WITH STRONG CRYINGS AND TEARS

--MATTHEW 26:36-50.--NOVEMBER 11.--

Golden Text:--"Not my will, but thine, be done."--Luke 22:42.

THE Garden of Gethsemane was not a wild woods nor a public garden, but an olive orchard. The name seems to indicate that upon the premises was located an oil-press for the extraction of the oil from the olives. It is supposed to have been the home of the mother of Mark, reputed to have been a wealthy widow, a friend of Jesus' cause. The house and outbuildings were probably in one part of the orchard or "garden." At all events it seems evident that the property was under the control of Jesus' friends, and that he and his disciples were well acquainted with the spot to which, after eating the Memorial Supper, our Lord and his disciples adjourned. The site now pointed out as this Gethsemane Garden is about half a mile from the wall of Jerusalem, and contains some remarkably old olive trees, the Garden itself being under the care of some monks who reside near by.

When our Lord and his eleven disciples had arrived at the entrance to the Garden or orchard, Jesus left eight of them there as a kind of outer guard, taking with him the favorite three, Peter, James and John, the three who on various occasions had been similarly favored--for instance, in connection with the visit to Jairus' daughter--and it was the same three who were privileged to see the "vision" on the Mount of Transfiguration. While Jesus loved all of his disciples, these three were especially dear to him, probably because of their special zeal and love for him. But on this occasion not even these, his specially dear disciples, could enter into or sympathize with the weight which was upon our Lord's heart; hence he stationed them and went still further along to engage in prayer to the Father. The language of all of the accounts of this incident taken together, especially in the light of the original Greek, shows that a sorrowful loneliness and anguish came upon our Lord with great force at this time. While with the disciples, doubtless in their interest, he had sought to be cheerful and to give them the needful lessons in preparing them for their trials; but now, having done all in his power for them,

and having gone to the Father alone, his thoughts turned inward upon himself and his relationship to the Father, and outward upon the public shame of his trial and conviction as a blasphemer, a seditious, and further on to the contemptuous mockery of the trial, and still further on to his public execution between two thieves. All this, now clearly before his mind, was enough for anguish, for pain, for deep, poignant sorrow.

"THE MAN OF SORROWS--ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF"

In viewing the matter of our Lord's sufferings on this occasion it is well to remember that his perfect organization --untainted, unblemished by sin, undegraded, undulled by dying processes--was much more susceptible to the pains and sorrows of the hour upon him than the feelings of others of the fallen race could be. Under adverse conditions the finer the sentiments and characteristics the greater the pain. A hoodlum ringleader might even glory in a ride in the patrol wagon, while to a refined person the experience would be terrible. Take another illustration: A finely educated musician, with an ear for harmonies well developed, would know a disturbance and a pain from a discordant note that might not at all be appreciated by one of less acute musical talent. We could even imagine that one of the seditious robbers crucified at our Lord's side might have gloried in his death as a triumph had there been over his head those words which were over our Lord's head, "This is the King of the Jews." It is, of course, difficult for us to appreciate perfection, since neither ourselves nor any with whom we have relationship are perfect; but we repeat that it must be true that the perfect organization of our Lord would suffer far more than any of his followers could suffer under the same conditions.

But there was another reason, and indeed it was the chief reason, we may be sure, why our Lord sorrowed

on this occasion so that his agony, becoming very intense, produced a bloody sweat. That other reason was his realization of his own situation in relationship to God and the covenant under which he made his sacrifice. To fulfil the Father's will he had left the heavenly glories, stooped even below angels to take the human form and nature, so that he by God's favor might redeem Adam and, in redeeming him, redeem the race condemned in him. He had pleasure, yea, "delight," in this self-abasement, as it is written, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: thy law is written in my heart." (*Psa. 40:8.*) It was this spirit that led our Lord to a full consecration of himself to death as soon as he was thirty years of age, and could properly thus present himself as our sin offering. The same love and zeal kept him faithful during all the years of his ministry, and enabled him to count as light afflictions all the experiences of life and the various contradictions of sinners against himself--because he realized that he was doing the Father's will.

Why was it, then, that at the very conclusion of his ministry, after he had told his disciples of his coming death, and having explained that he would be "set at naught by the chief priests and elders" and crucified--in the face of all this knowledge, confidence, loving obedience, faithfulness to his consecration vow unto death--why did our Lord experience so terrible an ordeal in the Gethsemane orchard?

The words of the Apostle explain the situation: he says of Jesus, "He offered up strong cryings and tears unto him that was able to save him from [out of] death." (*Heb. 5:7.*) But others have died, others have faced death in as terrible or even more terrible form, and done it with calmness. Why did our Lord break down in such deep sorrow and such strong cryings as to bring on a bloody sweat? We answer that death to him was a very different proposition from what it is to us. We are already nine-tenths dead, or worse, through our imperfections, our share in the fall, which has benumbed all of our sensibilities, mental, moral and physical, and which renders us incapable of appreciating life in its highest, best and supremely fullest sense. Not so our Lord. "In him was Life"--perfection of life. True he had for three and a half years been laying down his life, using it in the preaching of the truth, and especially in the healing of multitudes of the sick, when virtue or vitality went out of him and healed them all. This indeed weakened his physical frame and strength, but undoubtedly he continued mentally very full of vigor, life, perfection. Besides, our experiences with death and our expectancy of death lead us to estimate it as a certainty sooner or later. On the contrary, our Lord's experiences were with life: for centuries to us untold he had been with the Father and the holy angels, enjoying the perfection of endless life; his experiences with dying men were but for a few short years, and hence to him death had a very different signification from what it has to the dying race.

But there was more than this, much more: The heathen have a hope of future life built upon the traditions of their ancients, and God's people have hope of a resurrection built upon the divine promise and guaranteed to them through the merit of Christ's sacrifice--but what hope had Jesus? He could not share the heathen's hope that the dead were not dead, for he knew to the contrary; he could not share hope in a redemption and a raising up through the merit of another. His only hope, therefore, was that his entire career, from the moment of his consecration to the close, had been absolutely perfect, without flaw in the sight of justice, in the sight of the heavenly Father. It was here when alone that this awful fear overwhelmed him: Had he been perfect in every thought and word and deed? Had he pleased the Father absolutely? and would he be able on the morrow, with such a shrinking from the shame and ignominy as he would experience on account of his perfection--would he be able unflinchingly to perform his part? and would he, as a result, be accounted worthy by the Father to be raised from the dead on the third day? Or had he failed, or should he fail, even in some slightest particular, and thus be accounted unworthy of resurrection and thus become extinct? No wonder these weighty matters bore in upon our dear Redeemer's heart with unsurmountable sorrows, so that he offered up strong cryings and tears unto him who was able to save him from death [by a resurrection].

Matthew says he prayed, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me;" Mark says he prayed, "All things are possible;" Luke records it, "If thou be willing," and the substance of all is that our Lord was exceeding fearful of himself --fearful lest he should make a misstep and thus spoil the entire plan of God, which he had so obediently undertaken and thus far so loyally performed. Apparently death in any form would have been sufficient as a ransom for the first Adam's disobedience, meeting his death penalty; but it had pleased the Father to put his Son, the Redeemer, to the extremest of all tests, laying upon him the ignominy, the shame, of the cross. Our Lord's query was, Could he stand this? or would it be possible for the Father to deviate to that extent without interfering with the divine plan or the great work being accomplished? The necessary submission is indicated--"Not my will but thine be done."

HE WAS HEARD RESPECTING THE THING FEARED

The Apostle declares that our Lord was heard, that is, answered, in respect to the thing he feared--in respect to the cross and the recovery out of death. Prayers for help or deliverance from these troubles may be answered in two ways: The Father may remove the disturbing cause, or he may so strengthen

us that we will be able to quite overcome the disturbance. And with us, as with the Master, the Father usually takes the latter course, and gives us the peace and strength through his assurance in his Word. Thus we read of our Master that an angel appeared unto him strengthening him. We know not what message that angel brought to our dear Redeemer in his hour of loneliness and violent grief, nor is it necessary that we should: it is sufficient for us to know that the Father answered the prayer, that it was heard respecting the thing feared, that the fear was all removed, that calm reigned in our dear Redeemer's bosom thereafter, so that in all the affairs and incidents of that night and the following day he was of all men the coolest and calmest. We can surmise that the Father's assurance through the angel was that he had the divine favor, that up to that moment he had been faithful, that he had the Father's smile, and that he would be fully able to meet, when the time would come, all the exigencies of the hour of trial before him. With the assurance of the Father's approval no wonder sorrow took its flight, no wonder hope, joy, love and peace streamed into the dear Redeemer's heart, and he returned to the disciples ready for the events that he knew were about to transpire.

"LET US ALSO FEAR"

It is well that the Lord's people strive to live a rejoicing life, giving thanks always to the Father in all things, and rejoicing to be counted worthy to suffer shame, etc., for the cause of Christ. But as the Apostle elsewhere declares, Let us rejoice with fear: let not our rejoicing be of that reckless, self-satisfying kind which might ensnare us and entrap us; let our rejoicing be in him who loved us and who bought us and who is ever present with us, our best Friend and truest Guide. Let us rejoice, not in feelings of our own strength and courage and wisdom, but in the fact that we have a Savior and a great one, who is able to deliver to the uttermost all that come unto the Father through him. Thus may the Lord be our strength, our confidence, our shield, our buckler.

In our Lord's case we read that "He trod the winepress alone, of the people there was none with him." In his very saddest hour, when he most needed comfort and consolation, it was not possible for even the closest and dearest of his earthly friends to enter into his feelings or sympathize with him. How different with us! We are not so different from others that they cannot enter into our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears, if they have been begotten of the same Spirit and instructed in the same school of Christ. With us human counsel and sympathy are both possible and proper. Indeed, this is the divine provision as set forth in the Scriptures, which assure us that the Lord desires that we should comfort one another and build one another up as members of the body of Christ. Nevertheless we should never neglect the throne of heavenly grace in personal interview with our Father

and glorified Lord. Whatever of earthly companionship we may have, the Lord's companionship must never be underestimated or forgotten. The Lord sometimes sends his angels to us to comfort us, to give us the assurance of his love and to point out to us the sureness of our confidence, our hope. But it is not necessary any longer to send a heavenly messenger, for already the Lord has on the earth angels--messengers, members of the body of Christ --imbued with the Master's Spirit and love, and ready always and anxious to speak the kind word, to bind up the broken heart, to pour in the oil and wine of consolation and joy, and in every way to represent to us the Master himself. What joy often comes through such ministries, what blessing we have received in this manner, and what a privilege we have when occasion offers to be thus used of the Lord as his ministers of joy and peace and blessing to the fellow-members! Let us be on the alert that no such opportunity pass us by.

The Apostle intimates that we have need of fearing the same thing that Jesus feared when he says, "Let us also fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." As New Creatures we have tasted of the new life, the heavenly life: our eyes of understanding have to some extent been opened to see the grandeurs and beauties of the heavenly things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. And we, too, realize that our attainment to the glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with the Lord depends upon our faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice. If faithful, we know that he is faithful who has promised; if unfaithful, we know that we shall fail of that prize. What manner of persons ought we then to be under these conditions? Let us fear the loss of such a wonderful prospect of glory, honor and immortality, in the sense that we will seek constantly to fulfil our covenant and to abide in our Father's love and in our Redeemer's favor and smile. All who are thus walking carefully may have their moments in which they will experience something of the shadows of Gethsemane loneliness, for their testing, for their proving, and to develop in them the proper fear necessary to their full knowledge, to their appreciation of the situation and to faithfulness.

"SLEEP ON NOW"

During that hour of intense mental agony our Lord prayed and prayed again, and in the interim came to his disciples, doubtless craving such sympathy as they would be able to give; but he found them asleep, their eyes being heavy from sorrow, says the Evangelist. The hour was midnight; they were sharing his sorrows, but unable to appreciate them rightly. The Master chided, probably especially Peter, when he said, "What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." The noble

Peter had but a short time before declared, "Lord, though all men forsake thee, yet will not I," and even now he had the sword which he subsequently used in seeking to defend the Lord, and yet he did not realize the importance of the hour; he knew not, as the Master did, how serious were the testings and how close; he knew not that it was a very short time until the Master's words would be fulfilled. "Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice." Ah, had he realized as the Master did the trials that were near, how vigilant he doubtless would have been! And is it not so with us to-day? Are we not as the Lord's people in this harvest-time drawing close to the Gethsemane hour of the Church? Are we not already in the hour of temptation to a considerable extent? Will not the last members of the body soon follow the Head unto complete sacrifice? How ready are we for the ordeal? Are we asleep, or are we heeding the words of the Apostle, They that sleep sleep in the night, but we who are of the day should be awake, sober, putting on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day, in the time of trial already upon us, and in the still severer trials which no doubt will be ours in the near future? Are we prepared for the time when there will possibly be a general scattering, as these "all forsook him and fled"? How courageous we will be in our hour of trial will probably depend much upon our following the Master's example and securing first of all that positive conviction that we have the divine approval. Let us not then avoid the Gethsemane moment if it come to us in the Lord's providence, but let us also with strong cryings and tears look up to him who is able to save us out of death by the glorious First Resurrection, and let us remember that we have an Advocate, we have a helper. The Lord is our angel who speaks to us the Father's message, telling us that if we abide in his love all will be right in the end, and that he is able and willing to bring us off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors through his own merit.

"THE SPIRIT IS WILLING, BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK"

This was our dear Redeemer's comment upon his disciples. He appreciated the fact that at heart they were loyal to him--he was not unmindful of their forsaking all to be his followers, he is not a hard Master, but on the contrary ever willing to accept our heart intentions, even where the flesh fails to come up to the perfect standard; and doubtless, therefore, his words, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," were not meant as sarcasm, but in very truth he wished that they might get a little rest, refreshment, in view of the ordeals of the day approaching. But not long did they rest until the trial was upon them. Judas guided a multitude seeking for Jesus--not Roman soldiers, but a multitude, a rabble of the curious, with certain servants of the High Priest, who was also a Judge. These, then, were court officers, an

impromptu sheriff's posse, that came upon Jesus in the garden and arrested him by night, fearing that an arrest in daylight would create a disturbance at a time when the city was full of visitors to the Passover, and when disturbances were rather to be expected, and by the officers of the law sought to be carefully avoided.

Judas either knew the garden as a spot frequented by Jesus and the disciples, or had learned at the Supper where the company intended to go subsequently. When Satan entered into him and he resolved to earn the thirty pieces of silver by betraying the Lord, he left the gathered company at the Passover Feast and went to the chief priests and bargained with them, and now, as the result of that engagement, he came forward in advance of the multitude mentioned to meet Jesus and to indicate to the soldiers the one they wished to apprehend. As he approached he saluted, saying, "Hail, Rabbi," and kissed him. The Greek indicates that he kissed him repeatedly. Jesus received these expressions that belong to love, and knew that they were traitorous, yet made no evil retort. Instead he most kindly and respectfully said, "Friend, do that for which thou art come." The word "friend" does not signify loving friend--it is not from the Greek word *philos*, beloved, but from *hetaire*, which signifies comrade or partner.

AVOID THE JUDAS SPIRIT

Truly every disciple of Christ, realizing that the issue is with himself, will desire to follow such a course as will insure against his ever becoming a Judas to the Lord and his cause. God's foreknowledge that one of the twelve would prove a traitor, not only receiving the grace of God in vain, but using it in a most villainous manner, was not the cause of Judas' fall. The Apostle says, "The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 *Tim. 2:19*.) It is for us to determine how the favors of God shall be received and used, and God's foreknowledge in no sense of the word influences us.

We have every reason to suppose that Judas at the beginning of his career as a disciple was sincere. We may safely conclude that the gross deflection of his heart and character manifested at last came upon him gradually--that it began with the merest suggestion and ended with the most awful tragedy. The suggestion was probably along the line of selfishness; that he was not sufficiently honored amongst the twelve; that our Lord seemed to have a preference for Peter, James and John, and thus showed his lack of superior knowledge and ability--discernment. Doubtless Judas encouraged his own spirit of criticism. Self-complacent, he no doubt thought he saw places where Jesus and the others erred in judgment, failed to take advantage of opportunities, probably said the wrong word at the

right time, etc., etc. Such a heady spirit, such a critical spirit, such a self-satisfied spirit, such a selfish spirit always go before a fall. The history of the Church as well as our individual experiences attest this.

When Judas perceived that the cause of Christ was not prospering--that Jesus not only did not respond to the suggestions of the multitudes here and there that he become a king, but that on the contrary his mind turned in another direction, anticipating violence from the rulers of the Jews, the suggestion probably came to Judas that it was time to begin to "feather his own nest," so that when the disruption would come he would be one of the party who would gain and not lose by his experiences as a disciple. Thus selfishness was in control of his mind and led him to pilfering, as it is written, "He was a thief, and carried the bag." That is to say, he was the treasurer of the little company, and appropriated some of the funds to his own personal account. We can even suppose that in his perfidy he exonerated his theft with the thought that he had been giving his valuable time to the cause, and that what he took would not more than reimburse him the value thereof. Such is the spirit of selfishness, the very reverse of the Spirit of the Lord--the

spirit of self-sacrifice and whole-souled service to the Truth. Whoever has this spirit in any measure has the Judas spirit to that extent, and the result will surely be evil whether it amounts to such an awful result as that of Judas or not.

Our Lord declares that his faithful members in the world represent him, and that anything done against them is done against him. We may be sure, therefore, that the Judas spirit of selfishness even today might lead to betrayal of the Lord by the betrayal and injury of one of the least of his followers. Nor should it surprise us that these representatives of the Judas spirit follow his course even to the extent of betraying with a kiss, and oftentimes profess great love and respect for the members of the body of Christ, whom they secretly smite for their personal gain, or in an endeavor to gain place or influence or other selfish aggrandizement. Let each follower of the Lord apply to himself exactly Judas' words, saying, "Lord, is it I?" And let us each examine our own hearts to see to what extent anything of this Judas spirit might be lurking there, seeking a favorable moment to entrap us and destroy us as New Creatures.

Z '99, 115 – 119; R2467

THE LORD BETRAYED.

MAY 14.--*JOHN 18:1-14.*

"He is despised and rejected of men."--Isa. 53:3.

AFTER the Last Supper, and after his discourse to the disciples respecting the Vine and the branches, came our Lord's beautiful prayer recorded in *John's 17th chapter*. Then, probably about midnight, Jesus, with the eleven, passed outside the gate of Jerusalem, crossed the little brook called Cedron, and on the farther hill above it entered the olive orchard known as the Garden of Gethsemane: perhaps it was a public garden, or possibly the property of some one friendly to our Lord. What purports to be its site is now maintained as a garden, and has been for centuries. It is in charge of monks who take pleasure in receiving visitors to view it. There are about six or eight very large and evidently very old olive trees in this garden at the present--they give evidence of being at least one thousand years old, but possibly are much older.

While talking with his disciples and praying for them our Lord seemingly was full of good courage: while exhorting them that their hearts be not troubled evidently his own heart was not cast down. But as the little company wended its way to Gethsemane we may well suppose that a great weight fell upon our dear Redeemer's sensibilities. We can imagine him saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."

(*Matt. 26:38.*) The present visit to Gethsemane, therefore, was evidently very different from previous visits. Some appreciation of the momentous occasion was no doubt inspired in the hearts of the Apostles by the Master's dejection, and yet they probably but slightly comprehended what was about to come to pass.

Arrived at the Garden, we glean from other Evangelists that our Lord left eight of the Apostles near the gate, taking Peter, James and John, his closest companions, a little farther with him, and cautioning them all to watch and pray, because it was an hour of special trial. Going a little farther by himself, he communed with the Father in secret. His feelings were not and could not be shared even by his beloved disciples; they could not appreciate the trial through which he was passing; they had not yet been begotten of the spirit. Thus in his most trying hour Jesus was alone--"Of the people there was none with me."--*Isa. 63:3.*

It is difficult for the majority, even of Christian people, to appreciate the true character of our dear Lord's trial, which in this instance so wrought upon his nervous system as to produce a bloody sweat. Many

compare our Lord's course with that of some of his martyr followers who have gone forth into death with remarkable courage, and in contrasting matters they are inclined to wonder why our Lord, who was perfect, should have endured so much more a passion of suffering than his imperfect followers. To grasp the true situation it is necessary that several things be borne in mind:--

(1) For our Lord, who had a perfect right to life, to lay it down in death, was a very different matter from the laying down of a forfeited and impaired life on the part of those who could not hope to keep it long anyway. (2) Our race, already nine-tenths dead, has but a feeble appreciation of the great value of life--all of its experience having been in connection with dying, it has come to regard death with equanimity. But not so our Lord, the "prince of life," who had been with the Father from the beginning, and by whom all things were made--he realized life as a very precious boon, privilege, enjoyment. To him, therefore, death must have been much more terrible than to us who are already nine-tenths dead, and correspondingly blunted in all of our sensibilities. True he had the Father's assurance that if faithful unto death he should have a resurrection, and unquestionably he believed the Father's promise--all of his course in life gives abundant evidence of his implicit faith in the Father. And yet in his case this must have been a crucial trial to faith, much more so than with us. As we have only a shred of a forfeited life to lay down, so we have on the other hand, not only the Father's promise of a future life through Christ, but we have the example of the Father's power in the resurrection of our dear Redeemer: but our Lord Jesus had no such evidence of the divine power; he himself, according to the divine promise, was to be the "first-born from the dead," a first-fruit unto God of his creatures.--*Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:20.*

But all this had already been counted, weighed and accepted from the very beginning of his ministry. He had already informed the disciples that it was necessary that he should lay down his life for the sheep, and that he was about to do so. (*John 10:15.*) We are not to assume, therefore, when our dear Redeemer prayed, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me," that he meant if it were possible he might escape dying. He well knew, and had already explained to the Apostles, that the drawing of the world could not take place except he were lifted up as the sin-offering --that it was absolutely necessary that he should die for our sins and enter into his glory.--*John 3:14; 12:32.*

The cup which he prayed might pass from him, if possible, we must therefore suppose to have been the shame and ignominy of arrest as a law-breaker, a public trial and conviction, and subsequent crucifixion as a malefactor. It was one thing to die for our sins, as men generally die, without special shame or contumely; it was another thing that he should die with such extreme

shame, dishonor and contempt. Quite probably in the Father's wisdom this last feature was kept more or less hidden from our dear Redeemer until just about the time of its accomplishment. And apparently our Lord Jesus did not see any absolute *necessity* for his suffering more than the sinner suffered, in order to pay man's ransom price. Hence his prayer for a time was, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The Apostle also notes this distinction, saying, he "became obedient unto death," and then adds "even the death of the cross."--*Phil. 2:8.*

The death of the cross, with its attendant dishonor, reproach, etc., so far as we may be able to judge, was not necessary as our ransom price, because the penalty did not read, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die with public reprobation and dishonor by crucifixion. Since the penalty was death (*Gen. 2:17*), we may suppose that our Lord's death by any means would have fully paid man's ransom price. However, the additional features were deemed necessary by the Father, and the "cup" did not pass. The Father required this extreme of obedience as a test, a proof not only to himself but before all his intelligent creatures of the absolute loyalty of heart of his "well beloved Son," upon whom he designed shortly thereafter to confer the great blessing and high exaltation of his own divine nature and joint-heirship in his Kingdom. And the loyalty of our dear Redeemer was fully attested, as the Apostle declares; he "despised the shame," that is to say, the shame was as nothing in his sight in comparison with the accomplishment of the Father's purposes, the pleasing of the Father. (*Heb. 12:2.*) So long as he thought there was a possibility of the elimination of the shame feature, he was nervously anxious to have it so, if possible; but as soon as he realized that this was not the Father's will his heart instantly responded, "Not my will but thine be done." Decision respecting the Father's will immediately brought strength; he was now prepared for any experience, "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

Meanwhile Judas, who some days before had engaged with the high-priest to betray Jesus, and who left the upper room immediately after the Supper to carry out his nefarious plan, had received of the chief priests and Pharisees a band of men, with a person in charge as an officer, whose mission it was to arrest Jesus in the night and to secure his execution before the Passover. We must wholly disagree with the common thought that this "band" consisted of an army of three to six hundred Roman soldiers. They certainly acted very differently from soldiers ordinarily under such circumstances. Besides, the record by all of the Evangelists is that this band was sent, not by Pilate nor by Herod, the Roman representatives, but by the chief priests and Pharisees, who we know had no command

whatever of the Roman garrison. To our understanding this band which apprehended Jesus was very similar to the one mentioned in *John 7:32-46*.

It would appear that the Jewish Sanhedrin exercised a certain amount of authority in respect to religious matters, and were permitted to make arrests, but not to execute criminals without the consent of the Roman governor. We remember that the apostles were arrested on several occasions by such officers of the Jews.--See *Acts 5:17,18,22,25-40*.

Both Matthew and Mark speak of this aggregation, under officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, as a "multitude," and our Lord's words indicate that they were armed with sticks and swords such as were common to the people in general, and he does not mention spears, which would probably have been a part of the armament of a band of Roman soldiers. This thought is further emphasized by the fact that it was the high priest's servant who evidently made the first assault upon Jesus, and received a blow from Peter's sword. If Roman soldiers had the matter in charge the high priest's servant no doubt would have been less officious.

It is presumed, and apparently on good grounds, that this company seeking Jesus, under the guidance of Judas, went first to the upper room which our Lord and the Apostles had left probably less than an hour before. Finding that Jesus and the eleven were gone, Judas knew that he would be most likely to find them in the Garden of Gethsemane, for "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples." John's account omits the particulars of the betrayal given by the other Evangelists: possibly the loving disciple felt so much ashamed of the facts that he preferred not to mention them. Certainly very few acts of treachery ever paralleled this one, and all mankind, even in their perverted condition of mind, seem to realize that the position of traitor is amongst the most despicable on the calendar, and such treachery as that of Judas, against such kindness and love and goodness as that of his Master, we may be thankful is not so very common. And yet there are correspondencies in the experiences of the Lord's people, "in perils amongst false brethren." It behooves us each to look to it that we permit nothing akin to the spirit of Judas to rankle in our hearts. Our Lord puts the "members of his body" in such matters on a plane with himself, and assures us that whoever shall injure one of the least of these his brethren, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.--*Matt. 18:6*.

Of course there will always be a *motive*, good or bad, back of every deed done to the under-members of his body as well as to the Head. To find strong motives is not to find valid excuses for treacheries. So far as our experience and judgment go, the lesson is that such treachery from "false brethren" usually has its spring in covetousness, lust for influence, power or position, and the desire to glorify such unholy ambitions cannot fail to

corrupt any heart which entertains them. As one has said:--

"Sow a thought, you reap an act;
Sow an act, you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, you reap a character;
Sow a character, you reap a destiny."

Judas had been doing some of this sowing of evil thoughts for a considerable time before his thoughts took outward shape in evil acts. He was covetous of wealth and of influence; he became the treasurer of the little group of disciples, and the intimation of the Scriptures is that he purloined to his own private uses a portion of the contributions. As usual, his love for money increased the more he exercised it, until he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver - -equivalent to about twenty dollars of our money, tho representing in value of labor a much larger sum. It would seem, too, that Judas was looking forward to the promised Kingdom, and probably anticipated a high position as royal treasurer of that Kingdom.

It is quite possible, indeed probable, we think, that Judas was seriously disappointed in respect to the result of his betrayal. Apparently he expected that our Lord would deliver himself by miraculous power from the hands of his enemies. This is the most charitable view we would know how to take of his treacherous conduct: it relieves the blackness of the act only a very little, however, for he who would be willing to despitely use his best friend, even temporarily, for a money consideration, gives evidence of having prostituted every good and noble sentiment of his being to his love of money. Indeed, the love of honor may have had considerable to do with the matter, for he may have hoped by bringing about this crisis that our Lord would be compelled to set up the long-promised Kingdom, or else to own that all his claims and promises were fraudulent.

Judas surely did succeed in expediting matters, and in bringing about the installation of the embryo Kingdom of God; but not in the manner he expected, nor in any degree to his own honor or advantage. Thus it must be with those who receive the truth and who profess discipleship under it--not in the love of the truth, but in the love of honors hoped for, either present or future. Let us all who have named the name of Christ take heed and watch and pray lest there should be in any of us any of the elements of this vile character. And let us remember that there are various secret ways, as well as the more outward ones, in which we may betray the Lord and the "brethren."

The evangelist declares that Jesus knew in advance all things that would come upon him. We are elsewhere told that while he prayed, "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." (*Luke 22:43*.) This ministry may have consisted in

informing him of the Father's will in respect to what things he should suffer, and how they were to be expected, and this knowledge that the matter was settled, and the assurance that the Father would overrule it all, strengthened his heart and gave him the great calmness which we observe in all his subsequent course.

The "band" sent to apprehend him evidently expected that they might be obliged to seek for him in the shadows of the trees, etc., and hence they were provided with torches and lanterns. Unquestionably they were greatly surprised that our Lord, instead of fleeing from them, advanced to them, and inquired whom they sought. Quite possibly some of those in the "band" had previous knowledge of the Lord--of his miracles, power over devils, etc., and this may have been the reason for their manifestation of weakness in retreat and falling to the ground. Or it is possible that our Lord exercised over them a superior mental power which produced this effect, for the purpose of showing that he had full power to resist them if he had chosen to use it.

The same lesson, we believe, is taught by Peter's use of the sword upon the high priest's servant. We are to remember that one of the Evangelists records that our Lord instructed the apostles to take swords with them, and that when two were found he said, "It is enough." (*Luke 22:36,38.*) Our Lord had no thought of having his disciples war a carnal warfare on his behalf, as he subsequently stated, "If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." (*John 18:36.*) The two swords were sufficient to show that our Lord's apprehension was not because there were no means of defence, nor because of cowardice on the part of his disciples, but merely because of his submission--knowing that his hour was come, and that thus it behooved him to suffer for our sins and to enter into his glory.--*Luke 24:46.*

After this one manifestation of power, as indicating his full ability to cope with that multitude, and indeed his power to have more than twelve legions of angels to defend him, had he so desired (*Matt. 26:53*), we find our Lord fully submitting himself to capture, merely making condition that the disciples might go their way. How grand the character which at such a moment, under such trying conditions, could so fully forget self and feel interested merely in the welfare of others! How like what we should expect of Him!

"That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me I have lost none." We understand the writer to mean that here again in the Master's course we find an exemplification of his care for his disciples, as enunciated in his prayer just before leaving the upper room. While the thought of his prayer was chiefly in respect to their spiritual interests, that none of them should be lost, we do well to notice this as a corroborative illustration of our Lord's care of the physical interests of all who become his disciples. Not a

hair of their heads shall fall; nothing shall be permitted to injure them--every event and affair of life will be overruled for their highest good.--*Matt. 6:32,33.*

It was probably when Jesus began to be bound that Peter drew his sword in his defence; perhaps he remembered the Lord's words of a few hours previous, to the effect that his followers would all forsake him, and his own promise, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." (*Mark 14:29.*) Noble, zealous Peter! We love him for his noble expression of sentiment, and for his heroic defence of the Master with the sword against superior numbers. It is the custom of many to decry Peter's action, as another of his rash errors. We are to remember, however, that the Apostles had not yet received the holy Spirit and therefore could not clearly appreciate the fact that the Kingdom to which they were called is a spiritual Kingdom. Besides, as we have seen, he was merely following the Lord's counsel in taking the sword with him, and evidently also carrying out the divine purpose in using it. We see nothing to blame, everything to commend. It was a sign of larger import than Peter and the others there realized.

But having permitted the matter to go thus far, our Lord restrained Peter, saying, "Suffer yet thus far. Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And so saying he touched his wounded enemy and healed him. The disciples were to see, understand, be fully assured, that our Lord, in delivering himself to his enemies, did it voluntarily, and hence the proceedings were so pantomimed as to enforce this lesson.

How the grace of humility shines out in all the little affairs of our dear Redeemer's ministry; even at this moment of his surrender to his enemies he does not boast that his course is a voluntary one, nor seek praise as a martyr! He declares the simple truth, that the Father required this of him as an evidence of his personal loyalty to him. He confesses himself a servant of God, a son who learned obedience by the things which he suffered. "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Indeed, this was the strength of his victory--his will was fully submitted to the Father's will, and his faith grasped the fact that the Father permitted no unnecessary evils to come upon him, but only such as he could and would overrule for good.

There is a valuable lesson here for all who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the great High Priest,--for all the Royal Priesthood. We also are to remember that so long as we abide in Christ, and seek to walk in his footsteps, all the trying experiences of life are carefully measured for us by the Lord --that he does not pour into our cup of sorrow and trial any bitter experiences that are not needful to us, and that will not subsequently work out for us a far more

exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 *Cor. 4:17*.) With these assurances, and with the evidences of the Father's faithfulness to our glorified Master and Forerunner, we indeed may have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel.--*Heb. 6:18-20*.

The healing of the smitten ear, our Lord's last miracle, was most beautifully illustrative of his character and teachings. It exemplified his words, "Love your enemies, do good to them that persecute you." It showed that he was filled with the divine love which his teachings inculcated, and that he had no bitterness toward those who despitefully used and persecuted him.

The binding of our Lord seems to have been entirely unnecessary, except as the "band" might desire to make an exhibition of their prowess to those who had sent them. Our Lord seems to have remonstrated in respect to this, as per the account given in *Mark 14:48,49*: "Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves, to take me? I was daily with you in the Temple, teaching, and ye took me not. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." It was then that the eleven forsook him and fled. Judas continuing with the band went to the house of

Annas the priest, who doubtless had bargained with Judas, and no doubt it was at this time that the thirty pieces of silver were paid over, Judas having now shown a fulfilment of the contract. Poor wretched man! The Son of man indeed went to death, as it had been written of him, but this made none the less horrible the treachery, the covetousness and murderous spirit that delivered him up to his enemies. So with the members of the body of Christ: it must needs be that offences come--it is a part of the divine plan that the body of Christ should fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of the Head (*Col. 1:24*)--but this makes none the less sinful the conduct of those who have to do with such betrayals --especially if they be "false brethren" who have enjoyed some knowledge of the truth. In every instance, however, it will be observed that altho the trials worked out blessing for the Lord and will do so also for all the faithful who suffer with him, the rewards of unrighteousness sought by those who take Judas' course never yield them the honors and blessings they coveted, and for which they sold themselves to work evil.

Z '01, 77 – 80; R2773

GETHSEMANE--WATCHING AND PRAYING.

--*MATT. 26:36-46*--FEB. 24.--

"Not my will, but thine, be done."--*Luke 22:42*.

NO ONE CAN thoughtfully read this lesson of our Lord's dark hour in Gethsemane, and his "strong cryings and tears unto him [the Father], who was able to save him out of death" (*Heb. 5:7*), without feeling that there is something thoroughly incorrect in the idea so prevalent amongst Christian people that our Lord Jesus was his own Heavenly Father, Jehovah; and that it would have been a pretence, a mockery of prayer, for him to have supplicated as here represented, unless it were true also that instead of being in any sense the Father, he was simply what he claimed to be, the Son, the sent of God, the only begotten of the Father, the first-born of all creation, the beginning of the creation of God. (*John 10:29; 1:14; Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14*.) There is absolutely no other standpoint from which the language of our Lord and the apostles and his course of conduct are reasonably interpretable. On this point the earnest truth-seeker is referred to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V.

Our previous lesson closed with our Lord and his disciples leaving the upper room, where they had commemorated his death. They went to the Mount of Olives, to an orchard there, known as Gethsemane,-- the name signifying "oil-press place," probably because

olives were there pressed and the oil extracted used both for light and for food. One of the Evangelists speaks of it as the "garden of Gethsemane," but the word garden, as used in olden times, corresponds more nearly with our word orchard; it was not a flower-garden. There is a small enclosure now on the side of Mount Olivet, about 150 feet square, which is reputed to be the place of our Lord's agonizing prayer. It contains eight very old and very gnarled olive trees, and whether the exact spot or not, it represents it sufficiently well.

Our Lord probably had two reasons for going forth as he did that night. First, realizing that he would be arrested by the traitor Judas and the band he would bring, our Lord probably did not wish to bring commotion or trouble upon the friend who had so kindly permitted him the use of the upper room. Secondly, he desired the still quiet of midnight, out upon the hillside where he could be alone with God, to pour out his soul in prayer and obtain the strength necessary for the ordeal at hand. In harmony with this last thought, we find that when our Lord reached the entrance to the orchard he left eight of the disciples there, as an outer guard, so to speak, or as pickets, to

give notice; and took with him the same three disciples whom he had specially honored on other occasions, Peter, James and John: Peter, the bold and impulsive, James and John, the so-called "sons of thunder"-- the three most courageous, most zealous, most earnest, of his disciples. These he wished to have nearest to himself in this time of anxiety. And yet, on this occasion, he desired to be still more alone in his prayer, for even these truest friends could not appreciate the situation: "of the people there were none with him." Hence he left these and went a stone's throw further, where he prostrated himself upon his knees, and with his face to the earth, as the various accounts show, and thus, alone, he communed with the Father.

The different accounts of our Lord's experience on this occasion, grouped together, show us that mental anguish seemed to come upon him here with a force of poignancy he had never before experienced; and that the load became increasingly heavy--"sorrowful even unto death," a sorrow which almost crushed out his very life, says Matthew. *Mark says (14:33)* that he was "sore amazed," as tho the sorrow had come upon him unexpectedly, as tho he were bewildered. Luke, who was a physician, says that he was "in an agony," a contest, a struggle, the language used in the Greek implying a struggle of increasing force and severity, so that "his sweat became as it were great drops of blood;" and this bloody sweat is not unknown to physicians today, altho very rare. It marks an extreme tension of feeling--sorrow nigh unto death.*

Infidelity has suggested that this account of our Redeemer's sorrow, tears and prayers, attests his weakness. They argue that there have been many martyrs of various religions who have faced death with boldness, stoical firmness, sometimes with smiles, and that this account shows Jesus to have been cowardly, and inferior instead of superior to others. But there is a philosophy connected with the matter which they seem not to grasp. There is a dullness and numbness connected with fallen, degraded, coarse manhood that can regard pain and death with indifference,--which permits them either to undergo it themselves without great emotion, or to inflict it mercilessly upon others without compassion. We are glad that Jesus was not one of those cold, stoical icebergs, but that he was full of warm, loving, tender feelings and sensibilities; and that we can realize consequently that he is able to sympathize with the most tender, the most delicate, the most refined, the most sensitive, more than any other human being. He must have felt keenly the conditions under which he had placed himself, in laying down his life on our behalf; because the more perfect the organism the more sensitive and high-strung the feelings, the greater the capacity for joy and the greater the capacity for sorrow: and our Lord being absolutely perfect must have been

immeasurably more susceptible to the influences of pain than others.

Besides this he had a perfect life, unforfeited, and knew it, and realized that he was about to part with it; while others of the human family possess only a forfeited or condemned existence and realize that they *must* part with this sometime anyway. It would therefore be a very different matter for our Lord to lay down his life than for any of his followers to lay down their lives. Supposing 100 to represent perfect life, our Lord had the full one hundred units to lay down, while we, being more than ninety-nine-hundredths parts dead, through trespasses and sins and condemnation, could at most have only the one-hundredth part to lay down. A cold, stoical indifference to the loss of life, based upon knowledge that it could last but a short time longer anyway, would therefore be a very different thing from the clear knowledge which our Lord had, based upon his experiences with the Father "before the world was," and the realization that the life he was now about to lay down was not forfeited through sin, but was his own voluntary sacrifice.

There can be no doubt that this thought of the extinguishment of life was an important factor in our Lord's sorrow. The Apostle clearly intimates it in the words (*Heb. 5:7*), "Who in the days of his flesh... offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears, unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death, and was heard in [respect to] that he feared"--extinction. Intent continually upon doing the Father's will, day by day had passed in self-sacrifice, until now, in a few hours, the whole would be complete; and the thought of this brought with it another thought, *viz.*: Had he done the Father's will perfectly? Could he claim, and would he receive the reward promised him, a resurrection from the dead?

Had he failed in any particular to come up to the exact standard of perfection his death would have meant extinction; and altho all men fear extinction none could know the full depth and force of its meaning as could he who not only had the perfection of life, but had recollection of his previous glory with the Father before

the world was. For him the very thought of an extinction would bring anguish, terror of soul. This thought seems not to have come to our Lord with the same force previously. It was this, therefore, that bore down upon him now so heavily as an astonishing sorrow unto death. He saw himself about to suffer according to the Law as an evil-doer, and the question

*Prof. Tischendorf shows that this account of our Lord's bloody sweat is not found in the *Vatican MS.*, and that altho it appeared in the original *Sinaitic MS.* it

was crossed out by a later critic. The passage is therefore doubtful, or at least questionable.

naturally arose, was he entirely blameless, and would the heavenly judge thoroughly acquit him whom so many were disposed to condemn?

After praying awhile he went to the three disciples, in whom he had greatest confidence, and who, more than any others, were his tried and trusted companions, but he found them asleep. Luke explains that their sleep was the result of sorrow. The night and its lessons had been impressive; the memorial supper, which they did not fully understand, nevertheless left a weight of sorrow upon them, as the Master had intimated that it represented his death, and had further intimated that one of their number would betray him. The reaction from the sorrow brought a measure of stupor. Very gently our Lord upbraided them: "Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." It is not merely that you need to watch on my account; you need to be in a watching attitude on your own account. An hour of severe trial is upon us all; watch and pray lest ye fall in this evil time.

Then our Lord went to pray again. We are told that his prayers were in the same words; that is to say, that the same sentiments were expressed; and again a third time similarly: the one matter was weighing upon his heart. Could he rely upon it now, that having sought to do the Father's will, that having finished his course, he had done it acceptably? Could he have full assurance of faith that God would save him out of death by a resurrection? In answer to his petition a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort him, to assure him, to strengthen him. We are not informed what message the angel brought, but we can see that it was a message of peace, and that he brought assurances that our Lord's course had the Father's approval, and that he would be brought again from the dead by a resurrection. These were quite sufficient to give our Lord all the strength and courage necessary for the ordeal before him; and from that moment onward we find him the coolest and calmest of the notable figures brought to our attention. When approached by Judas and his band he was the most calm and self-possessed of all; when before the chief priest, Caiaphas, it was the same way; when before Pilate the same; when crucified, the same; he had found peace in the message that he was approved of the Father, and that all the gracious promises of glory, honor and immortality were his, and now he could pass through any ordeal.

The Scriptures assure us that our Lord was tempted in all points like as we (his brethren) are, and we see in this his experience in Gethsemane an illustration of one of the most severe trials which come to the Lord's people. It would seem as tho the Adversary at times attempted to discourage us by making us think that the trials and difficulties of the "narrow way" of sacrifice will be all

unavailing anyhow, and that we might as well give up. When such thoughts come to those who are earnestly and faithfully seeking to fulfil the conditions of their consecration vows they constitute one of the severest trials that could overtake them; if they have given up this world and its affections, hopes, aims, desires, exchanging all these for the heavenly, then anything which seems to becloud the heavenly hopes, leaves them in a darkness more utter, more dense, than they could have known had they never seen and appreciated the glorious promises. And what course should we pursue at such a time? We should follow the example of our Lord, and seek the Father's face, anxious to know whether or not everything is all right with him; anxious for some assurances that while the world may hate us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely, we still have his approval; anxious for some fresh assurance that it will be well with us, that the Lord will grant us a part in the better resurrection to life eternal.

But while we draw this correspondency between our experiences and those of our Lord we should not forget that there is an immeasurable difference; that we are of the dying and ninety-nine-hundredths parts dead already, and that therefore we cannot so fully appreciate the meaning of death nor the meaning of life eternal; and besides all this we have the example of our Lord, and the further assurance that our share in the First resurrection is not to be attained through perfection of our own, but through his perfection, provided we shall have attested to the Lord our full loyalty of heart, of intention, of will, however imperfect the results of our efforts to glorify him in our bodies and spirits.

The Evangelist records that our Lord prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." It may be that our Lord meant by this, If your infinite love and mercy see it possible in any manner to accomplish your purposes of salvation for mankind without it being necessary for me to die, then grant it to be so. But if this were the Lord's thought it would imply that he had not fully grasped the Father's plan of a restitution for mankind, made possible through a *ransom price* for Adam and his sin; for, seeing this, our Lord could not have supposed that anything short of the full ransom could secure the results. Quite possibly, however, the thought which bore heavily upon him was the realization now coming vividly to his mind that if apprehended as a blasphemer it would be the policy of his enemies not to destroy him secretly, but to deliver him over to the Romans; and he could realize the influence and power they would exert to secure the performance of their wishes, and he knew that the Roman method of execution was that of crucifixion, and he knew also that the Scriptures explicitly said, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Here, then, seems to have been the centre of his thought: I shall be esteemed of all my countrymen as forsaken of God, and as accursed of him; I shall die as a blasphemer, as a malefactor; whereas my every sentiment is, and has always been, fealty, loyalty to the Father. This, we believe, was the special feature of our Lord's anxiety, called the "cup" of sorrow, which he wished, if possible, might be removed. We believe that he knew his *death* to be necessary, unavoidable, as he had many times informed his disciples; but that it was this ignominious form of death, "even the death of the cross," that staggered him; for it not only bespoke shame and misrepresentation before the people, and those whom he loved and to whom he sought to do good, but it carried with it also the thought that he was accursed of God; and if accursed of God he could have no hope for a realization of the glorious promise of a resurrection. But when assured through the angel that he would not be actually accused of God, even tho he would for a time take the place of the accursed Adam and be "made a curse for us," his race, then even the cross and its shame could be endured with fortitude.

WATCH AND PRAY LEST YE ENTER INTO TEMPTATION.

In the case of our Lord and the apostles we see illustrated the value of watchfulness and prayer in the dark hour of trouble. Our Lord followed the direction he gave to the disciples: he watched, he prayed, he got a blessing, he was strengthened, and came off victor. They did not watch and did not pray, failing to realize the necessities of the occasion, and as a result we find them scattered, bewildered;--and one of them, the very strongest of them all, who boastingly had said a little while before, "Tho all men forsake thee yet will not I," was so overpowered by his surroundings, and so weak through lack of the very strength he should have obtained through watching and prayer, that he denied the Lord with profanity.

Whenever we find the Lord's people attempting to live a life of holiness and consecration, yet ignoring the injunction of our Lord to watch and pray, we know that they are unwise; and that however much they may be virgins, pure ones, they are foolish: they cannot hope to gain the victory over self and sin and the Adversary, single-handed, alone. If the Master himself needed strengthening, surely we also need it; and if he received it in response to supplications with strong cryings and tears, it is an intimation to us of the way in which God is pleased to bestow the full assurance of faith which is able to strengthen us as good soldiers to endure any and everything in his name and service. Those who seek the Lord earnestly and in prayer are as sure to receive a blessing as was the Lord Jesus himself; and altho there will not come to them the same kind of heavenly

messenger to comfort and encourage them, nevertheless a heavenly messenger of another kind will surely be sent. It may be in the person of a fellow-disciple, able to enter into and sympathize with us in our trials as difficulties, as none of the apostles could sympathize with our Lord or assist him. Or it may be that the messenger sent will be one of the apostles themselves, through the many gracious words of inspiration which God has communicated to us through them in his Word. But however the strength may come, it must be the assurance, not of men nor of angels, but of God, that we are pleasing and acceptable to him,--and that we may claim and expect the exceeding great and precious things which he has in reservation for them that love him.

So to speak, we are now in the hour of trial which cometh upon the whole world to try them. The present is represented in the Scriptures to be "the hour of temptation" or testing at the close of this age. It is the Gethsemane hour, in this sense of the word, to all who are the Lord's true people, fully consecrated to him. It is the hour, therefore, in which we, like our Lord, should be seeking the Father's face to receive the full assurance that we are his, and that he is ours; and that we may rely confidently on his strength to carry us through this time. It is the time in which we are to make sure, as we sometimes sing:

"O let no earthborn cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

It is a time in which those who neglect the Master's words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," will be sure to enter into temptation, and be tolerably sure to fall therein. And the fall will be severe, --and even tho, like Peter, they should afterward be recovered out of it, it will be with weeping.

Some make the mistake of praying without watching; others make the mistake of watching without praying; but the safe and only proper method is that which our Lord directed, to combine the two. We are to watch, and to be on our guard against the encroachments of the world, the flesh and the devil. We are to watch for all the encouragements of the Lord's Word, the evidence of their fulfilment, the signs that betoken his presence and the great changes of dispensation just at hand. We are to watch for everything that will strengthen us in faith and hope and loyalty and love; and while watching we are to pray without ceasing. We are to pray together as the Lord's people; we are to pray in our homes, as families; we are to pray in secret, in private. We are to have the spirit of prayer in all that we say and do: that is to say, our hearts should be going out continually to the Lord for guidance in all of life's affairs, that we may do with our might what our hands find to do, in a manner that will be acceptable to him, and that we may be shielded

by him from temptation that would otherwise be beyond our endurance, and that we may be ultimately delivered from the Evil One and have a place in our Lord's Kingdom. Brethren and sisters, let us more and more

remember and put into practice, in every home in which the WATCH TOWER is a visitor, these words of our Lord, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

=====

Z '95, 94 – 95; R1800

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

--APRIL 28, *MARK 14:12-26*;--*MATT. 26:17-30*; *LUKE 22:7-30*; *1 COR. 11:23-25*--
Golden Text--"This do in remembrance of me."

VERSES 12-16. The first day of unleavened bread when they killed the Passoverlamb, was the 14th of Nisan (See **MARCH 15 TOWER**, page 71). The Feast of Passover began on the 15th and lasted for seven days; the day beginning at sunset--6 P.M., of the preceding day. (*Exod. 12:18-20*.) The prohibition of the use of leaven during this time was a reminder (1) of the haste with which they fled from Egypt, not having time to wait for bread to rise (*Exod. 12:34,39*); and (2) of their sufferings in Egypt, on account of which it was called the bread of affliction. (*Deut. 16:3*.) But (3) its chief significance was the putting away of sin, leaven being incipient putrefaction and hence a symbol of impurity. (*1 Cor. 5:6-8*; *Matt. 16:6*.)

Considering Israel in its typical character and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage as a type of the deliverance of the world from the bondage of sin and death, this feast is seen to be a type of the world's proper condition in the Millennial age. Having, through Christ, experienced the great deliverance from the present bondage of sin and death and the great time of trouble, it will be required of all that they put away from them the leaven of sin and, in grateful remembrance of their deliverance, keep the feast (rejoicing in and partaking of the good things of God), not with the leaven of selfishness, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth

The killing of the passover lamb, which prefigured the sacrifice of Christ, was always done on the 14th of Nisan (*Exod. 12:6*); so also the sacrifice of Christ was accomplished on this same day, thus fulfilling the prediction of the type. The sacrifice of the lamb prefigured the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of "the Church of the *first-born*," and the subsequent deliverance of the whole groaning creation of which the nation of Israel was a type.

During the passover week hospitality was recognized as a duty in Jerusalem: hence the readiness with which the Lord's request for a room was granted. Probably the man was a believer, as *verse 14* would seem to indicate; or there may have been some previous arrangement with him, as *verse 15* seems to show.

Verses 17-21. The strife to be greatest, mentioned only by *Luke (22:24)*, probably began when they were taking their places at the table, each desiring to be nearest to the Lord and so manifesting somewhat of a selfish spirit. This was made the occasion of a very touching illustration of humility on the Lord's part, and the

enforcement of the truth upon the minds of the disciples that without this very necessary qualification they could not enter the Kingdom of heaven.--*John 13:5*.

The attitude of the disciples upon the Lord's announcement that one of them should betray him showed at once the effect of this lesson on humility. They were not overconfident, but each seeming to fear his own stability, inquiringly turned to the Lord saying, not, Lord, is it this one or that one? but, Lord, is it I? They had the spirit of self-examination.

The hardness of Judas' heart and the depth of hypocrisy manifested in the coolness with which he heard the Lord's warning (*verse 21*) and in the deliberate plotting and wicked perseverance in evil are in marked contrast with the humble, loving spirit of the eleven. It is an illustration of the hopelessness of a soul willingly submitted to the power of Satan. *Verse 21* leaves no ray of hope for his restoration. See also *John 17:12*. The goodness of God only hardened his heart and therefore there was no remedy.

Verses 22-24 point out the very obvious import of the emblems, bread and wine. The broken bread represented the sacrifice of Christ's humanity for our redemption, the benefits of which sacrifice we must individually appropriate by faith, such appropriation being symbolized by the eating of it. The cup, the wine, which symbolized his shed blood, the blood of the New Covenant shed for many for the remission of sins, had the same significance as the broken bread, our partaking of it also meaning our appropriation of the benefits of his sacrifice, thus securing our justification. So the Lord declares, saying, "Except ye [thus by faith] eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." (*John 6:53*.) And to this significance the Apostle Paul (*1 Cor. 10:16,17*) shows another; viz., our participation with him, as members of his body, in the sacrifice: --"The cup of blessing for which we bless God, is it not a *participation* of the blood of the Anointed one? The loaf which we break, is it not a *participation* of the body of the Anointed one? Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf."

After the Supper followed all those words of instruction, consolation, comfort and hope, and the touching prayer reported by *John (13:33-38; Chapters 14-17)*. It was a season never to be forgotten by the disciples, one whose influence was very manifest in their subsequent course.

Verse 25 foretells the final triumph of Christ and the Church when the sufferings of the present time are all ended. Then their feasting together will have a new and blessed significance, being commemorative of the

heroism of their faith and their fidelity to the divine purpose under the most crucial tests, and a rejoicing together in the victory that faith and fidelity.

Verse 26. "And when they had sung a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives." Instead of dispersing they went out together. Observing the Lord's sadness and forebodings, the eleven sought to comfort and help him with their love and sympathy, while Judas went on his diabolical errand.

Z '95, 95 – 96; R1801
THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.

--MAY 5, *MARK 14:32-42*;--*MATT. 26:36-46*; *LUKE 22:39-46*; *JOHN 18:1*--
Golden Text--"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

AS we consider the solemn scenes of this lesson, let it be with reverence and deep gratitude, remembering it was our load the Master bore, that it was the chastisement of our peace that was upon him, and that with his stripes we are healed.

The narrative, so familiar to every Christian, is one full of precious lessons, especially to those who, by his grace, are endeavoring to follow in the Lord's footsteps. We observe (1) that when the Master realized that his hour of betrayal and fierce temptation was close at hand, having first comforted, counselled, and prayed for and with his disciples, his next strong impulse was to seek a solitary place for prayer and communion with God, that he might find grace to help in time of need. (2) We note also his love for his disciples, and his desire for their love and sympathy in return. "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end." And because he loved them, and knew that they loved him, he permitted them to accompany him to the place of prayer, that they might watch and pray with him. Leaving all but Peter and James and John at the entrance of the garden, as a sort of outer guard against the sudden intrusion of his betrayer upon his last hour of prayer, he advanced with the three--the three in whose ardent natures he seemed to find the most active and consoling sympathy--and, with an earnest appeal to them to watch and pray, he left them and went about a stone's throw beyond. Three times did he rise from prayer and return to them in anguish of soul to feel the touch of human sympathy, saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." It was a sorrow, an agony, which, of itself, would have worn him out shortly--an intense mental and nervous strain which caused him to sweat great drops of blood.

It was no sign of weakness in the Master that he thus craved human sympathy. His was no coarse, stoical nature, insensible to pain and shame and loss; nor was it a proud, self-centered nature which stood aloof from human fellowship, although those with whom he

associated were so far beneath his glorious perfection. Gracefully he condescended to men of low estate, and esteemed them brethren beloved, of whom he was not ashamed. His was a refined nature, keenly appreciative of all that is lovely and pure and good, and correspondingly sensitive to pain from everything to the contrary of these. Human degradation and human woe must continually have borne heavily upon him during all his earthly life. But in this awful hour all the griefs and burdens of the whole world were rolled upon his shoulders, and he was to suffer as though he himself were the sinner--to suffer death, extinction of being, trusting alone in the Father's grace for a resurrection. Into this one hour were crowded, not only the mental realization of death and the physical agony and shame, the cruelty and torture of a horrible death, but also the sense of desolation to be experienced when even his beloved disciples, overcome by fear and dismay, should forsake him; and the sorrowful reflections upon the ir retrievable loss of Judas, and upon the course of the Jewish nation--"his own" people, who despised him and were about to call down upon their own heads the vengeance of his blood, saying, "His blood be upon us and on our children." He foresaw the terrible calamities that in consequence must soon overwhelm them. Then the degradation of a whole guilty world, which must continue to groan and travail in pain until by his sacrifice he should gain deliverance for them from sin and death, caused him to feel the burden of responsibility to an extent which we can only approximate, but cannot fully comprehend. And in addition to all this was his knowledge of the fact that every jot and tittle of the law with reference to the sacrifice must be perfectly fulfilled according to the pattern in the typical sacrifice of the day of atonement.* If he should fail in any part of the work,

*See TABERNACLE SHADOWS, page 39.

all would be lost, both for himself and for men. And yet, though a perfect man, he realized that the flesh, however perfect, was unequal to the task.

How much depended upon our Lord's fortitude in that awful hour, 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 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, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: ...I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee [from falling or failure], and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles....He shall not fail nor be discouraged."

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.

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.

Now commenced the realization of the dreadful forebodings of Gethsemane. Mark his calm, dignified

fortitude, as he addresses Judas and the Roman soldiers, and its effect upon them. They were so overpowered with the grandeur and nobility of this wonderful man that they could not have taken him had he not voluntarily placed himself in their hand. Notice, too, his kind consideration for the bewildered and weary disciples, and his loving excuse for them, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak," and his request to the Roman soldiers at the time of his arrest that they might be permitted to go their way (*John 18:8*), that so they might escape sharing in his persecutions. So through all the trial and mocking, and finally the crucifixion, his courage and solicitude for the welfare of others never failed.

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*); and, with the Lord, our hearts will respond--"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

TEST OF THE APOSTLES AND ITS LESSON

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."--Mark 14:38.

WE RECOGNIZE these as words spoken by the Master in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night in which He was betrayed. They were addressed especially, and with much force, to the eleven Apostles who were with Him, and more particularly to the three whom He had called apart to be a little nearer to Him, as He went a little further on in the Garden to pray. The Master seemed to realize that wonderful events were to take place that night. But the Apostles did not grasp the situation. Their ears were dull of hearing. They were not without *loyalty*--it was not a matter of *indifference* with them, but they did not *comprehend*.

We are to remember that at this time the Apostles were not begotten of the Holy Spirit, and could not, therefore, so fully watch with the Lord and pray with Him as if they had been spiritually enlightened. Jesus had told them that He would be crucified, but they had taken this statement as one of His dark sayings. They had heard very many of the parables which He had given to the people, which they were not able to understand. He had told them that when the Holy Spirit should come it would guide them into all Truth and show them things to come.

Amongst those dark sayings Jesus had told them that He was the Bread that come down from Heaven. This they did not understand, nor how He was like unto the Manna of olden times; neither did they understand how the eating of this Bread would give them life. These things had been so mysterious that they could not accept them, and, as a result, many of those once interested fell away from Him. They said, How *could* the whole world eat His flesh or drink His blood?--it is ridiculous! So they walked no more with Him. But the Apostles and a few hundred brethren continued to have faith in Him. They said, There is some deep meaning in His words, and some hidden reason for His strange course; perhaps, as Jesus says, we shall in time understand. We see so many evidences that He is the Son of God that we must not stumble over these things. Thus they continued to believe in Him, and to hold these obscure statements in abeyance in their minds.

IMPULSIVE PETER'S MISTAKE

So, when Jesus told them that the Son of Man must go up to Jerusalem, and that the Jews would crucify Him, and that the third day He would rise again from the dead, they could not understand. He had already intimated that all the glorious promises referring to Messiah were applicable to Him. How, then, *could* He be crucified? Accordingly Peter began to upbraid Him, saying, What strange things you speak! It shall not thus be done unto Thee. But Jesus said unto him, "Get thee behind Me,

adversary; thou art an offense unto Me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."--*Matt. 16:23*.

Peter, of course, recognized the rebuke and knew that he had made a mistake. He had thought that some evil might happen to the Master, but no such thing as that He would be *crucified*. A few days before a multitude of people had cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (*Matt. 21:9*.) There were a million or more Jews in Jerusalem who had hailed Him as King. Therefore the Apostles thought that the chief priests would not *dare* to do anything against Him. And now they had partaken of the Passover Supper, and Jesus had said to them that He desired to eat the Passover with them before He should suffer. Peter had declared that, though all should deny him, yet would he never deny his Master. Evidently Peter said to himself, What would there be to make me deny Him? I could not think of doing such a thing!

The disciples had thought that everything was propitious --so much so that Jesus found them disputing amongst themselves as to who would be the greatest in the Kingdom. And they had been so engrossed with these things they were discussing that they could not think of washing each other's feet. Then the Master and the Apostles had walked across the brook Kidron and to the Mt. of Olives. After they had entered the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus took Peter and James and John with Him and said, "Tarry ye here, while I go and pray yonder." Then He had returned to them, and finding them asleep had said, "Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." But they could not think of any temptation into which they *could* enter in that peaceful spot.

TRIAL AND VICTORY IN GETHSEMANE

Jesus had agonizing experiences in the Garden. He was fearful lest in some way He might have violated the Law. He feared lest He had made some mistake and had not come up to the standard--the full requirements of the Father, in respect to the new life which He had begun. In such case His whole human life would be a failure, not for Himself only, but for the world of mankind whom He had come into the world to save from sin and death. After the Lord had passed through His trial-experiences in the Garden, God sent Him special help. An angel came and ministered unto Him. We do not know the nature of this help; but if we can read between the lines, the angel gave Him the assurance that He had fulfilled His

part--He had rendered *full obedience* to the Father's will.

Just as soon as Jesus received this assurance, He became very calm. If He had the *Father's* favor, the *Father's* blessing, He could pass through *any experience*, no matter what it might be! Then he returned to His disciples intimating that He had gotten the victory. He was no longer in trouble. He *had* said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." But *now* confidence had come, in the assurance God had given Him. No longer would it be necessary to watch and pray, so far as He was concerned.

RESISTING TEMPTATION AUGMENTS STRENGTH

We note that to the disciples this exhortation was specially needful at that time. With such peculiar trials and testings before them, if they had been watching and praying to God for wisdom and grace, lest they should *fall* in their temptations--*enter into* them--they would have had help to resist them. They would have fallen into temptation the same, but they would not have *entered* into it. Temptations may be presented to us many times a day, and when they come we may be deceived and misled. But a temptation *resisted* makes us so much the *stronger* to resist the next. And so the Apostle James says that we are to "count it all joy when we fall *into* divers temptations." (*James 1:2*.) But no one could count a *temptation a joy* if, when it should come upon him, he would *fall* in it--*enter into* it.

St. Peter could never look back without regret to the moment when he denied his Master. If he had been watching and praying for guidance, he would have come off conqueror when Jesus was arraigned before the tribunal; he would not have thought of denying his Lord. He would have been stronger when the temptation came, and would have said, No, I will never deny the Lord! I will cast in my lot with Him! Afterward he might have said, I tell you, brethren, it was a *tight place*! But I am rejoicing that I fell into that temptation and was yet able to come off conqueror in that terrible hour!

But Satan was desiring to have him, to sift him out, as it were. If, after he had denied the Lord, Peter had said, I will not back down now, I will give the Lord up entirely, and pass right out! then he would indeed have lost *everything*. But, although he was caught in the temptation, he ultimately gained the victory. It was cock-crowing time, and Peter, hearing the cock crow, said to himself, There, that is just what Jesus said--that before the cock should crow I would deny Him thrice. So St. Peter went out and wept bitterly; and, after he had it out with God in tears and prayers, he started again in the good way. And so *our* entering into temptation may not mean our utter rout. But the more we *resist* temptation, not allowing it to overcome us, the stronger characters we will become.

TEXT NOW APPLICABLE IN A SPECIAL SENSE

The experiences of the disciples in connection with this text have been, in the broad sense of the word, applicable to all of God's people throughout this Gospel Age, but they are particularly so today. Now is the time for the Church to be specially on the alert, to be attentive, to fortify themselves against the wiles of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. As the poet Longfellow has expressed it,

"Be not like dumb, driven cattle;
Be a hero in the strife!"

We might be in the Lord's army and yet be *like* driven cattle. But we are to be intelligent. The Lord has given us an understanding of His Plan. In this we have at the present time an advantage over the Apostles, for they had not yet seen the great Divine Plan of the Ages and the significance of the sufferings of the Church. We have much advantage in this way. Jesus had explained to them about Himself: "Thus it behooveth the Son of Man to suffer and to enter into His glory." And He had opened the Scriptures to them as far as they were able to understand, and had indicated the *necessity* of His suffering. Still they could not clearly understand. But we have an advantage in that we know what the Lord's Plan is; and so the words of our Lord are more forceful in their application to *us* than to the early Church.

Let us be watchful, active, alert, and co-labor with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to consider the offer made to us--the great High calling--the most wonderful thing ever known in all creation! We shall never have another opportunity of showing God and our Lord Jesus our zeal for righteousness and our earnestness of spirit. The present opportunity is a special one. God has made it possible for all of us, who are in harmony with Him, to grow in grace and in knowledge, and thus to be more intelligent in our service. And we are to pray in harmony with that intelligence.

What may be the character of the temptations which shall come upon us, we may not clearly discern in advance; for if we knew all about them beforehand, they would be but slight temptations and easily overcome. Watch, therefore, and pray always. The only safe way is to be *always prepared*; for our Adversary, the Devil, is seeking whom he may devour. He knows our weak points better even than we do, and is ever ready to take advantage of them. Each of us needs the Spirit of the Lord in his heart, as well as His "grace to help in time of need," if we would be overcomers. Our daily exhortation to self should be,

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of Sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

--MATTHEW 26:17-30.--NOVEMBER 4.--

WHILE holding, in common with the great majority, that the Memorial Supper was instituted by our Lord on Thursday night in connection with his last celebration of the Passover, and that he was crucified on the next day, Friday, we have no contention with those who suppose that these events took place on other days of the week. We lay great stress on the fact there accomplished and its significance as the antitype of the Passover instituted by Moses, and as the finishing of our Lord's great sacrifice for sins--the sins of the whole world. For these vital principles we are willing to contend earnestly, as they are part of "the faith once delivered to the saints;" but as respects the particular days of the week we will not contend, as in our estimation they are trifling matters, of no value, no consequence, and should therefore in no sense of the word disturb the minds or heart-fellowship of the Lord's people.

Our lesson opens with our Lord's instructions to his disciples as to where they should prepare for him and themselves, as a special and peculiar Jewish family, a place in which to celebrate the requirements of the Law in the type which pointed to our Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God. Respecting this supper our Lord himself said, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." He did not refer to the principal feast, which lasted a week from the 15th day of Nisan. He was referring to the roast-lamb supper, eaten with bitter herbs, which preceded the general feast, and which reminded them of their deliverance from Egypt, and became the basis of their subsequent rejoicing as a liberated people. The upper room was provided for this supper. Things were made ready, and at even, at sundown, after six o'clock, our Lord and the twelve assembled. One of the accounts tells us that there was a dispute amongst the disciples respecting the more honorable positions at the supper, and that Jesus rebuked this ambitious spirit in them by washing their feet, thus illustrating his own humility of heart, his readiness to serve each and all of them. Thus he set them an example that he, whom they esteemed greatest amongst them, should be their principal servant, willing and ready to serve any and all.

"ONE OF YOU SHALL BETRAY ME"

While they were eating Jesus remarked that one of them would betray him, and at once a spirit of sadness spread over the company, and each one--feeling it incumbent upon him to prove his innocence of such a charge--asked, "Lord, is it I?" With the rest, Judas also put this question, realizing that if he did not also ask, it

would imply his acknowledgment that he was the one, and in response to his inquiry Jesus replied, "Thou hast said,"--that is to say, "Yes, I refer to you." Another account tells us that Jesus answered the query by saying that the one for whom he would dip a sup would be the betrayer, and having dipped the sup--a piece of the lamb and a piece of the unleavened bread they were eating--Jesus gave it to Judas, thus indicating him without directly naming him. It would appear, too, that the other disciples up to this time had not learned to know Judas--that it was subsequently they ascertained that he was a thief, etc.

Amongst the Jews and Arabs deceit and betrayal were not so very uncommon, but there was a code of honor recognized according to which no one would eat the food of the person he would in any wise injure. As food was seasoned with salt, it was probably this custom that was known as the "covenant of salt"--the covenant of faithfulness. To succeed in having an enemy eat at your table or take of your food seasoned with salt was at that time amongst those people the equivalent of a pledge of his lasting friendship--that he would never do you injury. Apparently Judas was so lacking of a proper spirit that he did not even acknowledge and obey this custom of the time--to be loyal and faithful to the one whose bread he ate, of whose salt he partook. Hence our Lord's words, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me."

Nevertheless Jesus testified that his death was not a victory on the part of his betrayer and his enemies, but in harmony with what had been written of him before by the prophets. Nor are we to consider that Judas in this matter was merely fulfilling a prophecy irrespective of his own responsibility, his own wilfulness in the matter: such a thought is negated by our Lord's statement, "Woe unto the man by whom the Son of man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." These words leave no question, we think, that Judas had already enjoyed his full share in the great atonement work through the intimate opportunities he had of coming to a clear knowledge of the truth, and the corresponding responsibilities. Evidently his was the sin unto death--the Second Death. Hence, aside from any future existence we are to consider that his life was a useless, wasted one, and that its joys did not overbalance its sorrows and anguish when to the latter were added his subsequent despair and suicide.

"TAKE, EAT; THIS IS MY BODY"

It was after the Passover Supper, after the eating of the lamb with the herbs and unleavened bread, etc., that Jesus instituted the Memorial Supper which, with all of his followers, by his direction takes the place of the Passover Supper of the Jews. This was a new matter, and the apostles listened with interest to his words as he blessed some of the thin cakes of unleavened bread and then brake them and handed portions to each of his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body." What could he mean? During their three years in his company they had learned that he spake in parables and dark sayings. On another occasion he had declared in their hearing that he himself was the bread which came down from heaven, of which if a man partook he would live forever. Now he was handing them some unleavened bread and said it was his body. They evidently understood him to mean that this bread to them would represent or symbolize his body, for he told them on this occasion that *thenceforth* they should do this in remembrance of him--thenceforth they should remember him as the slain lamb and use unleavened bread to represent his flesh, and partake of this instead of eating as previously of a literal lamb.

He could not have meant, as Roman Catholics and some Protestants believe, that the bread was by his blessing turned into his actual flesh, for he still had his flesh--he was not killed for about fifteen hours later. Hence all the arguments to this effect are foolishness and sophistry. When he said, "This is my flesh," it was as much a figure of speech as when he said a little later, "I am the vine," "I am the door," "I am the Good Shepherd," "I am the way, the truth and the life," etc. The right, sane view of the Master's words is apparent: he was represented in all these different ways. In the case under consideration the bread would represent him, his flesh, to his apostles and to all his followers throughout the Gospel age.

As bread stands for and symbolizes all food (indeed wheat is said to contain every element of nutriment in its proper proportion), so the teaching of this symbol is that whoever would have the life which Christ has to give must accept it as the result of his sacrifice. He died that we might live. The rights and privileges which he surrendered voluntarily may be eaten, applied, appropriated by all who have faith in him and who accept him and his instructions --such are reckoned as having imputed to them the perfect human nature, with all its rights and privileges lost by Adam, redeemed by Christ. None can have eternal life except by the eating of this bread from heaven. This applies not only to believers of this present time, but also to those of the future age. Their life-rights and privileges must all be recognized as coming to them through his sacrifice. In a word, the bread representing our Lord's body teaches our justification through the acceptance of his sacrifice.

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

Next our Lord took a cup containing the fruit of the vine. We are not told that it was wine; therefore it is an open question whether it was fermented or unfermented, and in view of all the circumstances of our time and the requirements of the Lord's Word, we may feel sure that unfermented grape juice or raisin juice will fulfil the terms of his injunction. Since it is never called wine, but merely the cup and the fruit of the vine, there is no room for disputation amongst the Lord's followers. Each may be free to follow his own conscience in the matter of what kind of a fruit of the vine he shall use: for our part we prefer the unfermented as being less liable to do injury or to awaken dormant passions for drink in the Lord's followers.

In connection with the cup the Lord said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (the two oldest Greek MSS. of the New Testament, the Sinaitic and Vatican, omit the word "New"). True, the New Covenant must be sealed with the blood of the Christ before it can go into effect, and it is not to go into effect until the opening of the Millennial age. But there was another Covenant--the old Covenant, the foundation Covenant of all covenants--namely, the Abrahamic Covenant, which was sealed by our Lord's death. That it would be thus sealed was typically represented in the figurative death of Isaac at the hand of Abraham and his figurative resurrection from the dead. The Apostle assures us that Isaac represented our Lord Jesus, and also declares, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" --the Oath-bound Covenant.--**Gal. 4:28**.

Applying our Lord's words thus to the Abrahamic Covenant, which he was sealing or making sure, we see that it was by his death that he became the heir of that Covenant and all of its glorious provisions for the blessing of all the families of the earth. And from this standpoint we see a special meaning and force in Jesus' words to his followers, "This is my cup, drink ye all of it." Thus understood, the invitation to drink of the Lord's cup signifies an invitation to all of his elect Church of this Gospel age to partake with him of his cup of suffering and death--to lay down their lives with him that they also might have a share with him in the coming glories of the Kingdom, which will be the divine channel for the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

While the eating of the bread and participation in the justification effected by our Lord's death and by the acceptance of the same, will be necessary to the whole world if they would have the restitution blessings purchased by our Lord's sacrifice, nevertheless the cup is not for the world but only for the Church, only for the consecrated of this Gospel age. "Drink ye all of it"-

-not only all of you drink of it but all of you drink all of it--leave none. There will be none of the sufferings of Christ left over for the coming age, no more suffering for righteousness' sake will then be known to the world--only evil doers will suffer thereafter. Now is the time when whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution, and when all of the Lord's followers who would be loyal to him and counted worthy to share in his Kingdom glories must expect to drink of his cup. Hence again the Lord unites the two thoughts, saying, "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you." Those who consecrate during the present time as the Lord's disciples, to walk in his steps, must not only share in justification through faith, but must also share through sacrifice the cup if they would gain the life eternal promised to the elect who now forsake all to be his disciples.

NEW WINE IN THE KINGDOM

In declaring, "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom," our Lord implies a new wine under different conditions at some distant date. He thus confirmed in their minds what he had been teaching them for some weeks previously, namely, that he would not at this time set up his Kingdom, but that instead he would suffer, be crucified, and that they must expect also to suffer with him; and that by and by, when the Kingdom should be established and himself be in glory, his disciples should be with him in his throne. These new thoughts in their minds were confirmed by the lesson now given.

The cup in the present time must speak to them of the crushing of the grapes, the blood of the grapes, their Master's blood, the life sacrificed, poured out, and their lives also sacrificed with him in his service, in his cause. But the sufferings of this present time were linked with the glory that should follow by the thought that all who would drink of the present cup of suffering, ignominy and death would also share in his cup of joy and blessing, glory and honor in the Kingdom. This same thought should be before our minds, and like the apostles of old it will help us more and more to look forward to the Kingdom as the time when suffering for the name of Christ shall cease, and when the glories shall follow and result in the blessing of all the families of the earth. Our Lord here identifies his Kingdom with his second advent, and in no sense of the word intimates that they would drink of this new wine at Pentecost, nor at the destruction of Jerusalem, nor at any other time but in that mentioned in the prayer which he taught them, saying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

This should be the thought before our minds also: in waiting for the Kingdom we are waiting for the second coming of our Lord and his subsequent setting up of the

Kingdom; that is, the resurrection change, the glorification of his faithful ones who must be with him and share his glory. No wonder the Apostle declared that he who hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure. (*1 John 3:3*.) He that hath this hope of the new wine in the Kingdom, the participation with his Master in those glories and honors and blessed opportunities for uplifting the world of mankind, will take lightly, yea, joyfully, suffering, trials, sacrifices of this present time--yea, he will be glad to suffer with the Master that they also may be glorified together.

"FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS"

So far as we are concerned, it is in vain that men teach that God forgives sins without exacting a penalty therefor from anybody. It is in vain that they claim that Christ was not the ransom price for the sinner, that it was not necessary that he should die, the Just for the unjust, in order that he might bring us back to harmony with God--in order that God might be just and yet justify the sinner. It is in vain, too, that they claim that it was sufficient that Jesus was a great teacher, by whose *words* the world should be saved. Our reply is in harmony with the Master's statement here and elsewhere and the testimony of all the apostles, that it was necessary that Christ should die for our sins; that our sins could never have been forgiven by divine justice except through the divine arrangement by which he paid our penalty. To us it is a most precious thought, therefore, that our Lord's blood was indeed shed for the remission of sins of the many. And it is also a precious thought to us that we are privileged to be so intimately associated with him as members of his body; that our little sacrifices covered by his merit are in God's sight esteemed as part of the great sin sacrifice for the world; that as joint-sufferers with Christ we are permitted to drink of his cup and be immersed in his baptism into death.

It is equally vain for Evolutionists and Higher Critics to tell us that, so far from man falling from God's likeness into sin and death, he has been on the contrary evolving upward step by step, from beastly conditions to where he now is. We believe them not. We hold fast the divinely inspired testimony that there was a fall, and that this made necessary the redemptive work; that Christ was the honorable servant of God, privileged and authorized to make atonement for the sins of the whole world; that he began this atonement work in the sacrifice of himself; that he has been carrying it on during this Gospel age by the sacrificing of the members of his body, and that he will soon complete it, when he, with all of his members glorified, shall during the Millennial age distribute to the world the blessings of that redemptive work, causing all to come to a knowledge of the Truth, of the love of God; that its height and depth and length and

breadth are immeasurable, yea, all accomplished through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

The Apostle Paul, referring to this Memorial Supper, quotes our Lord as saying, "This do in remembrance of me," and then adds, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (*1 Cor. 11:24-26.*) The thought is that we are to thus celebrate this great transaction until the time come for the Kingdom celebration of it with the new wine, the joy, the glory, the honors, which we are to share with him who loved us and bought us. The Apostle evidently does not mean merely until the parousia, the presence of the Lord to gather his servants and reward them, but rather until all shall have been gathered and the Kingdom class shall all thus have been set up and glorified.

The same Apostle in the same epistle (*1 Cor. 10:16,17; 12:12*) emphasizes the thought of the unity, the oneness of the Church, with each other and with the

Lord. He declares, "The loaf which we break, is it not the communion [the fellowship] of the body of Christ?" Are we not all as parts of one loaf broken with the Lord? "For we being many are one loaf and one body: for we are all partakers of that one loaf"; and again he adds, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [participation, fellowship] of the blood of Christ?" Assuredly this is the thought then, that from God's standpoint there is the one great Messiah, the elect Head and the elect members of his body. These, as one loaf, constitute from God's standpoint the bread of everlasting life for the world, and in order to fill this picture each and all must be broken, each and all must partake of the cup of Christ's suffering and death before entering into his glory. And not until all these sufferings have been completed will the Lord's time come for the new dispensation, the new day, the day of blessing instead of cursing, the day of restitution instead of dying, the day of uplifting instead of falling, so far as the world is concerned.

Z '04, 141 – 143; R3363

THE LAST SUPPER

--MATT. 26:17-30.--MAY 29.--

JESUS and the apostles came to Bethany, near Jerusalem, that they might eat the Passover Supper in the holy city, and that our Lord might suffer at the hands of his enemies, as he had foretold his disciples--that thus he might accomplish an atonement for the sins of the people. His arrival was just a week before his crucifixion. The following day at the supper Mary anointed him. On the next day he rode on the ass into Jerusalem, was not received, wept over the city, and said, "Your house is left unto you desolate." On the following day he visited the temple, driving out the money changers with the scourge of cords. The next day he gave his last public teaching in the temple, declaring himself to be the light of the world. Every night he seems to have returned to Bethany to the house of Lazarus and Martha and Mary, which was also the home of himself and the apostles whenever they were in that vicinity. The next day, Wednesday, the Lord remained in Bethany in retirement, and on Thursday sent two of his disciples to make ready the Passover, which was eaten by himself and the twelve that night--"the same night in which he was betrayed."

The feast of Passover lasted a week, and was one of the most important celebrated under the Jewish arrangement. During that week, leaven, as a type of sin, was carefully put away from all the food and destroyed in every house, in intimation of the holiness and purity,

the unleavenness, of the Lord's people--spiritual Israel --typically represented by natural Israel. The whole week was a festival of rejoicing because of God's deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. The feast-week began on the 15th day of the first month, Jewish reckoning, but it was preceded on the 14th by the killing of the lamb, and the sprinkling of its blood upon the doorposts of the houses, as a memorial of what took place in Egypt on the night in which the Lord spared the first-born of Israel under the blood and slew the first-born of the Egyptians, and thus made the latter willing to let his people go free. It was for the eating of this memorial lamb on the night previous to the beginning of the Passover feast-week that our Lord sent his disciples to make ready, as explained in our lesson.

Luke tells us that it was Peter and John who were sent on this mission, and Mark tells us that they were to know the man at whose house the feast would be held by his carrying a pitcher of water. It has been surmised by some that the house was that of Mark's mother, Mary, and that the upper room thus used was the same one in which the apostles subsequently met and where the pentecostal blessing was poured out upon them. We do know that it was at the house of this Mary that many gathered to pray for the release of Peter from prison. It was a "large upper room" and was

already prepared with a suitable dining couch of proper dimensions. It has been surmised that Jesus took this indirect way of indicating the place that Judas might not be informed until the time for the gathering, so that there might be no interruption of the feast and our Lord's subsequent discourses, recorded in *John 14:17*, on the part of those who were seeking his apprehension. Peter and John made ready the Passover in the sense of furnishing and preparing the lamb, the unleavened bread, bitter herbs and the fruit of the vine, and in the evening at the appropriate time the entire company gathered for the celebration.

A LESSON IN HUMILITY.

Luke only records (22:24-30) that there was strife amongst the apostles on this occasion, though *John (13)* also implies this. We are not to suppose that the apostles were actuated wholly by ambition and selfishness. We may well suppose that the strife was for position of nearness to the Master because of their love for him. The Lord improved the opportunity to give them a most wonderful discourse, which doubtless lasted them through the remainder of their lives. They had arrived late in the afternoon, over dusty roads, and, not being of the wealthy class, no servants were there to receive them and to wash their feet; and instead of thinking to do this one for another, to their mutual comfort, they had been striving with one another for favored positions at the table, John evidently gaining the most desired position next to the Master-- possibly accorded him because he was not only a relative, and one whom Jesus specially loved, but also because he was the youngest of their number.

The customs of olden times differ from those of the present in many respects. In eating they reclined on a couch surrounding a table. They leaned on their left elbow and used the right hand for conveying food to the mouth; thus their heads were brought comparatively close together, while their feet extended out behind over the couch. Apparently permitting the dispute to run its course and the supper to begin, Jesus arose, and going behind them began to wash the feet of one after another of them. Such a service rendered to them by the Master was of course a severe reproof. They should have thought of washing his feet and each other's and now probably wished that they had done so, but at the time each was apparently intent upon establishing the fact that he was in no degree inferior to the others. They had forgotten so soon the lesson of a short time before--that he who would be greatest amongst them should be servant of all. Our Lord here had the opportunity of illustrating this very matter: he was willing to serve them all, was continually serving them all in the spiritual things, and hence they regarded him truly and properly as their Master; but now he showed them his humility to the extent that he was willing to serve them in the most

menial capacity also. Valuable lesson! May it never lose its import amongst the Lord's true followers. Some, however, have erred in supposing that this became an institution or ordinance similar to the Lord's Supper and baptism: to our understanding the lesson to be conveyed by this symbol, and its application to each of us at any time and at any place, would be that we should seek to render some useful service to the brethren regardless of how menial it might be, and that so doing to them it would be reckoned of the Lord as though done unto him.

"BETTER THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN BORN."

It was while they were at supper that Jesus, appearing very sorrowful, gave as an explanation that it would be one of his own chosen twelve that would betray him and thus become accessory to his death--one of those who dipped with him in the dish, partaking of the same supper, the same bread, the same roasted lamb. Then he pointed out that although this was all written, and thus no alteration would be found in respect to the divine plan, nevertheless it signified a very gross breach of friendship--one sad to contemplate. It really made no difference to the Lord, so far as his intention and consecration were concerned, whether he were apprehended by the rulers without any betrayal or whether the betrayal were by a comparative stranger or by a disciple: the fact would make no change in the divine arrangement; but it was a cause for great sorrow that it should be one who had been a bosom friend and disciple.

"It had been good for that man if he had not been born," implies to us that, from the Lord's standpoint, Judas had already experienced so large a measure of knowledge and opportunity for better things that his responsibility for his act was complete, and that there would be no hope for him at any time in the future. We will certainly have no objection to it if the Lord should find some excuse for granting Judas a further opportunity for correcting his character, but we see no Scriptural reason for thinking there will be such further opportunity. From our standpoint it appears as though he sinned against great light, experience and knowledge--contact with the Lord and under the power of the holy Spirit--one of those commissioned to heal diseases and cast out devils in the name of the Lord, and as his representative, and using his power. His end was a sad one: every suicide by his act confesses his wish that he had never been born.

"LORD, IS IT I?"

Another account tells us that each of the disciples inquired of the Lord. "Is it I?" and last of all Judas. The others felt sure that they had nothing to do with it and wished the Lord to confirm their innocency, and the eleven having asked and no response from the

Lord indicating their culpability, the implication would be that Judas was the one; yet such was his spirit of bravado that he also asked the Master, "Is it I?" Jesus answered him, "Thou hast said," or "It is you." How noble was the Lord's reproof; he could have scarcely said less--not a threat, not an imprecation, not a manifestation of bitterness, but merely an expression of sorrow and of pity. What a lesson for us! Our enemies are to be pitied, not hated; to be blessed as far as we are able, but never to be cursed. It is well for all of Jesus' disciples to watch and pray against any Judas-like disposition to sell the Lord or his Truth or his brethren for money or other selfish considerations. Knowing that there will be others of the Judas class, let us guard our hearts and ask, "Lord, is it I?"

While they were eating the Passover Supper prescribed by the Jewish Law, or rather while they were still at the table after they had finished the supper proper, Jesus took some of the remaining bread--which in shape at least more particularly resembled what we today would call crackers--he blessed it, broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take, eat, this is my body." Another evangelist adds, "broken for you." Romanists and some Protestants claim that in consequence of the form of this statement, "this is my body," and the next statement, "this is my blood," we should understand that whenever the memorial bread and fruit of the vine have been consecrated they are changed from being bread and wine and become the actual body of Christ and his actual blood. We dissent from this as being most unreasonable and most untrue; the bread and the wine merely symbolized or represented the body and blood of our Lord. In absolute proof of this note the fact that our Lord at the time he used these words had not yet been broken and his blood had not yet been shed. Hence to have used these expressions in any other way than the way we do use them, namely, as meaning that the bread and the wine *represented* his body and his blood, would have meant to misrepresent the truth--to have falsified; and we cannot perceive that this was done or would have been proper to have been done by the Lord or any of his followers.

The bread, as our Lord explained, represented the bread from heaven--his flesh which he sacrificed for the sins of the world. He invites all of his followers to eat of it, and we partake of his flesh when we appropriate to ourselves the blessings, the mercy, the grace secured by the breaking of his body. We thus appropriate to ourselves the benefits of the sacrifice which secures to us the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with the Father.

"THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT."

He took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to the apostles, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many for the

remission of sins." This represents my blood--it will continue to represent my blood with you and with all my dear followers at all times, and will be to you on such occasions a reminder of my death and of the covenant which was thus sealed between God and sinners by myself as the great Mediator between God and man.

The New Covenant or New Testament sealed by the blood of Christ is the one that is mentioned throughout the Old Testament and referred to by the Apostle in his letter to the *Hebrews (8:6-13; 10:29; 12:20)*. It supersedes the Law Covenant. The latter, mediated through Moses, provided that whosoever would do the commandments of the Law should have everlasting life; but the New Covenant provides for mercy, and, recognizing the fact that in our fallen condition we cannot do the things we would, the Mediator of the New Covenant, by his death on behalf of the people, is able to keep Justice whole and yet deal with us according to our intentions instead of according to our actual accomplishments, and meanwhile to lift mankind up, up, up, out of degradation to that plane or condition of being where they will be able to do perfectly all the good desires of true and honest hearts.

The Apostle Paul shows us that this bread and cup had a still further and broader signification. He it was who had so clear an understanding of the "mystery"--Christ in you--that we are members of the mystical body of Christ, participators now in his sufferings, and, if faithful, to be members of his glorious body and participators also in his glory. From this standpoint, as the Apostle explains, the broken loaf represents not only the breaking of the Lord Jesus personally, but the breaking of all his mystical members throughout this Gospel age; and the drinking of the cup was not only his own participation in death that he might thus seal the New Covenant on behalf of mankind, but that his invitation to us to join with him in partaking of the cup, "Drink ye all of it," implied that we could have participation with him in the sufferings and death in the present time--participation with him in the inauguration of the New Covenant conditions during the Millennial reign. How grand is the thought, how deep, how broad! What a wonderful privilege that we should be permitted to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ and to look forward to a participation in his glories in the future. From this standpoint we see fresh force in his word to the apostles noted in a previous lesson, namely, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" As not every one is worthy to be invited to such participation, so also not every one who is invited will so appreciate the privilege as to participate in this matter joyfully and gratefully. Let us each resolve and say to the Lord, as did James and John, "Lord, we are

able"--we are willing. By thine aid we will come off conquerors and more than conquerors.

THE NEW WINE--THE JOYS OF THE KINGDOM.

Our Lord declared that he would no more participate in the fruit of the vine until he would drink it new in the Kingdom. The thought is not that he would drink new or unfermented wine in the Kingdom with them, but that until in the Kingdom the new or antitypical thing represented in the wine would not be fulfilled. When the Kingdom shall come all the sufferings and trials of the present time will be past, the treading of the winepress, the wine making, will all be over, and instead the wine shall be that of joy and exhilaration, representing the joys and the blessings beyond imagination or expression that will be the portion of all those who truly have fellowship with our Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time and also in the glories that shall follow. The Kingdom time is very close at hand now--certainly 1800 years and more nearer than it was when our Lord spoke

these words--and the evidences of its steady inauguration are multiplying on every hand. Our hearts should be proportionately rejoicing in anticipation and we should proportionately be faithful in the present time in the drinking of the cup of sorrow, suffering, shame and contumely, and thus testifying of our love and our loyalty.

Following this was the discourse which has blessed so many of the Lord's people down through intervening centuries recorded by *John (chapters 15, 16, 17)*. Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives--to the Garden of Gethsemane and to fresh trials upon all of the disciples. So it has seemed to us that with every recurrence of the Memorial season, and every fresh symbolization of our pledge to the Lord, come fresh trials, fresh testings, fresh siftings upon the Lord's people. Who shall be able to stand? Let us hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing firm unto the end, hold fast the faithful Word, hold fast the exceeding great and precious promises, hold fast to our Passover Lamb, our Deliverer!

Z '99, 78 - 80; R2449

I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE.

--APRIL 16.--*JOHN 13:1-17*.--

OUR Lord's ministry was about ended. He had met with his twelve chosen disciples to celebrate the Passover supper, declaring, "I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (*Luke 22:15*.) The passover lamb which they were to eat *typified* our Lord himself, and the eating of it by his disciples represented how believers of the Gospel age were to feed upon Christ in their hearts, and by faith appropriate to themselves the blessings secured to them through his death, "For even Christ our Passover [Lamb] is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." (*I Cor. 5:7,8*.) But, inasmuch as Jesus was the antitypical Lamb, it was appropriate that the type should be discontinued; and hence it was that our Lord, following this last typical Supper, instituted the Memorial Supper of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine as representing the *antitype*--his broken body and shed blood.

According to the Jewish custom the Passover supper was celebrated by families, and the twelve apostles, specially chosen by our Lord and giving their allegiance to him as their Head, constituted the nucleus of the family of God--whose hearts and hopes and aims were one--for "ye are all called in one hope of your calling" (*Eph. 4:4*). Judas was not excluded, altho our Lord evidently knew beforehand that it was he who would betray him. This furnishes us the lesson that, as followers of Christ, we should not judge one another's

hearts, nor surmise evil. After the evil of the heart has manifested itself in words or deeds is quite time enough to separate ourselves from others who profess the Lord's name and desire to fellowship with us. True, the evil begins in the heart, before the outward act, but we should always hope that the brethren may gain the victory, and should seek to do nothing to stumble any, but everything to help them to overcome the influence of the Adversary, and the weaknesses of their own flesh.

John does not give a particular account of the Passover supper, but seems merely to bring in certain valuable features and lessons connected therewith, omitted by the other Evangelists. His declaration is that our Lord knew beforehand that he had reached the end of his earthly career, and was specially solicitous of improving the closing hours with his particular, chosen friends and companions, by inculcating some good lessons. "He loved them to the end"--completely, fully: his own sharp trials, present and approaching, did not distract him, nor absorb his attention. He was, as heretofore, still thinking of and endeavoring to bless others. Nor need we suppose that this love for the twelve applied to them exclusively; rather, that he viewed the twelve as the representatives of "them also which should believe on him through their word"--as he expressed the matter in his prayer to the Father.

With this view in mind we can realize that what our Lord said and did to the apostles was intended to be applicable and instructive to all who are his since then. -- **John 17:20.**

From Luke's account it would appear that on this occasion there was a strife amongst the apostles, a contention, respecting which of them should be esteemed greatest. (**Luke 22:24-31.**) This strife may not have been solely one of selfishness, in the evil sense of the word, but partially prompted by love for the Master--it may have been in respect to their several positions at the table, the coveted position possibly being closeness to our Lord's person. We remember how James and John had made request that they might be on the right and on the left of our Lord in the Kingdom, and we remember that in connection with this narrative it is declared that John was next to our Lord, and leaned upon his bosom.

Quite possibly this dispute respecting greatness arose in part from the fact that they were not in this instance treated as guests, but merely had the upper room put at their disposal; having no host, no provision was thereby made for the usual washing of the feet, and it was neglected. The matter of feet-washing in eastern countries, when sandals were worn, was not merely a compliment, but a necessity, the heat of the climate, the openness of the sandals, and the dust of the roads, making it almost indispensable to comfort that the feet be bathed on arriving at the house after a journey. Apparently this question of who of the twelve was greatest, and of which should perform the menial service of feet-washing for the others, had developed the fact that none of them were anxious to take the servant's position.

Apparently our Lord permitted them to thus disagree, without settling their dispute, without appointing any of their number to the menial service. He allowed them to think the matter over--time to relent and reconsider, and they even proceeded to eat the supper, contrary to custom, with unwashed feet.

Then it was that Jesus arose from the supper, laid aside his outer garment, and attaching a towel to the girdle of his under-garments, took a basin and a ewer for the water, and began to pour the water and wash the feet of his disciples. It was not the custom of the East to pour the water into the basin and put the foot into the water, but to pour the water upon the foot being washed; thus each had clean water, and little was wasted--for water is much more scarce and precious there than with us. We are to remember also that in the East at that time tables and chairs such as we use were not in vogue. On the contrary, the tables were low and shaped somewhat like a horseshoe, and those who sat really reclined, lying upon the table, with the left elbow resting upon a pillow or divan, their heads toward the inside of the horseshoe, where there was a space provided for the food, and also a space for a servant to enter and place the food. Thus it

will be seen that the feet extended backward, and could quite easily be reached without disturbing those who were eating.

Our Lord very evidently had already washed the feet of several of the disciples before he came in turn to Peter. Seemingly none of them offered objection, altho no doubt the thought of their own contentions upon this subject, and unwillingness to serve one another, brought them blushes of shame and confusion of face. But when it came to Peter's turn, he protested. It would never do, he thought, to permit our Lord to perform so menial a service. He asks, "Lord, dost *Thou* wash *my* feet?" But our Lord did not stop to reprimand Peter--to give him a thorough "setting down" and scolding, as some of his followers might be inclined to do under such circumstances: he merely insisted on continuing, and treating Peter the same as the others, saying that he would explain the matter later, and that if he washed him not, he could have no part with him.

One cannot help admiring the noble traits in Peter's conduct, even tho with the same breath we be forced to acknowledge some of his weaknesses, and herein all the Lord's followers find a lesson of encouragement, for tho they find weaknesses and imperfections, if they find also the heart-loyalty to the Lord which was in Peter, they may continue to have courage and hope to press on as he did, from victory to victory, and at last to have the prize, the reward of faithfulness.

When Peter learned that there was more meaning to the washing of the feet than merely its kindness and comfort, and its reproof of the lack of the spirit of humility amongst the disciples, he wanted, not only his feet, but also his hands and his head washed. Noble, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent Peter! But our Lord explained that this was not necessary, saying, "He who has been bathed has no need except to wash his feet, but is wholly clean." (*Vs. 10--Diaglott.*) Public baths were in use at that time, but even after having taken a general bath, on return to the home it was customary to complete the matter by washing the feet; and this seems to be the inference of our Lord's remark. The apostles had been with our Lord, and under the influence of his spirit of love, meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, for three years, and had been greatly blessed by "the washing of water through the word" spoken unto them.--**John 15:3; Eph. 5:26.**

There is an intimation in the Lord's words, too, that this spirit of pride which had manifested itself among them had been inspired to some extent by their treasurer, Judas,--as evil communications always are corrupting. (*1 Cor. 13:33.*) This final lesson from their great Teacher was a very impressive one upon the eleven, whose hearts probably were in the right condition to receive the reproof and the lesson, but upon Judas, altho his feet also were washed, the effect evidently was not favorable. The spirit of evil which

had entered into him before the supper--the desire to obtain money, and the proposition to obtain it by betraying the Lord, evidently continued with him, and instead of being moved aright by our Lord's humility and service, he was the more moved in the opposite direction--to think little of him. So it is with all who have professed the Lord's name in every time. Those instructions, examples and experiences, which are working out blessing and proving beneficial to some, are proving injurious to others. The Gospel, in its every phase, is either "a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." As it was God's goodness and mercy that hardened Pharaoh's heart, so it was the love and humility of Jesus that hardened Judas' heart, and these principles are still at work, and may be witnessed in the harvest siftings to-day.--**2 Cor. 2:16; Exod. 7:13.**

After accomplishing the work of washing the feet of all, our Lord resumed his outer garment and reclined again at the supper (this was the Passover Supper--the Memorial Supper of bread and wine being instituted afterward). Our Lord now improved his opportunity and explained to them the meaning of what he had done. He pointed out to them that this menial service did not signify that he was not the Lord and Master, but did signify that as Lord and Master he was not unwilling to serve the lesser members of Jehovah's family, and to minister to their comfort, even in the most menial service; and that they should not have been unwilling, but glad, to have rendered such service one to another.

The example which our Lord set was not so much in the kind of service (feet-washing), as in the fact of service. Nothing in this example, as we understand it, was in the nature of a ceremony to be performed by the Lord's people, annually, weekly, monthly, or at any other time; but the principle of his service constituted the *example*, and is to be observed amongst his followers at all times--they are to love one another and to serve one another, and to consider no service too menial to be performed for each other's comfort and good.

Those who have interpreted this to signify a ceremony similar to the symbolical ceremony of the Memorial Supper and the symbolical ceremony of Baptism, are, we think, in error. There seems to be nothing symbolical in it. It is merely an illustration of the principle of humility which is to attach to every affair of life. If any of the Lord's people need washing, or need any other assistance of a menial character, their brethren should gladly and

joyfully serve them; and whoever possesses the spirit of the Lord will surely render such service; but to insist, as some do, that each of the Lord's people should first wash his own feet and have them clean, and then that each should wash one another's feet ceremoniously, is contrary to his *example* which he instructs us to follow. The example was a *service*, and not an inconvenience and ceremony.

Once a year, on the day before "Good Friday," the pope washes the feet of twelve aged paupers who are brought from the streets and duly prepared by a preliminary washing in private. The pope's ceremonious washing is done in the presence of many notables. A similar ceremony is performed annually by Emperor Joseph of Austro-Hungary. Neither of these ceremonies, however, is, to our understanding, according to our Lord's example, but contrary to it--likewise the ceremonious washing performed by some denominations of Christians.

All who are truly the Lord's followers should heed carefully and follow exactly the true example of the Master's spirit of meekness, humility and service to the members of his body. The whole thought is contained in his words, "The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things [if you appreciate these principles applicable to all the affairs of life], happy are ye if ye do them [if you live according to this rule, loving and serving one another]."--**Vss. 16,17.**

Feelings of emulation, strife and vain-glory seem to specially beset any of the Lord's people who are possessed of any degree of talent or ability or honorable situation in life, and especially those who are in influential places in the Church; and while these, therefore, need to be specially on guard against this besetment of the flesh, it should not be forgotten that, as some one has said, "There is a pride that looks *up* with envy, as well as a pride that looks *down* with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble." Hence, all who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line--to keep very humble, very lowly in conduct, and particularly in mind.--**Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.**

TWO PASSOVER MEMORIALS

--OCTOBER 11.--*MARK 14:12-25.*--

"As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do proclaim the Lord's death till He come."--1 CORINTHIANS 11:26.

THE SUBJECT of today's lesson is one of the most interesting features of Jesus' earthly ministry. He knew that the Apostles did not know that this was to be His last supper with them. Although He had intimated the nearness of His death, His disciples had found it impossible to comprehend that any such disaster could be so near at hand as He had intimated. Jesus, however, with full consciousness of what it meant, was longing for the consummation of His work. It was probably on the very day at the close of which He and His disciples went to eat the Passover that Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I in difficulty until it be accomplished!"--a baptism into death, which was finished the following day.

Peter and John were the two disciples sent to make ready the Passover. Evidently Jesus was at Bethany, at the home of Lazarus, when He sent this word. It is supposed that the large upper room in which the Passover was eaten by Jesus and His disciples was the same one in which the Apostles and others were gathered to await the Pentecostal blessing. This very room is still pointed out by tradition, but is controlled by Mohammedans, who are especially jealous of Christians.

In the evening of the same day, Jesus with the entire Twelve met in this room, all the preparations having been attended to. They met to celebrate the Jewish Passover at its appointed time. The lamb had been roasted, and the unleavened bread prepared, also the bitter herbs. Everything, we may be sure, was exactly in conformity with the original requirement; for Jesus and His Apostles were bound by every feature of the Jewish Law as much as were other Jews--the New Dispensation not yet having been ushered in. Every feature of the Law was binding up to the time of the Pentecostal blessing, which marked the Divine approval of the sacrifice of Jesus and the Divine acceptance of all those who had become His disciples by a full consecration.

KINGDOM HONORS DESIRED

So far from realizing that they were on the eve of a great tragedy, the Apostles believed that Jesus would very soon be enthroned as King. They remembered His promise that they should sit with Him in His Throne. This promise seemed so near of realization to them that they could think of little else but the degree of honor which they would have in the Kingdom. They seemed to feel that unless they contended stoutly for it, they would

not get so honorable positions. Perceiving their attitude of mind, Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so: but he that will be greatest amongst you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

These were new standards, difficult for them to understand; and apparently they are still difficult for the followers of Jesus to comprehend fully. The One who will be chief in the Kingdom will be the One who was the chief Servant in the flesh. This greatest Servant of all was, of course, the Lord Jesus Himself. But the Master intimates that the same principle holds good in respect to all of His followers. Whoever of them will most faithfully, most earnestly, most zealously, serve the brethren will thereby be increasing his favor with God, and be preparing himself for so much higher station in Messiah's Kingdom.

With the thought that any menial service would signify admission of their unworthiness of a high place, the disciples made no arrangement for feet-washing, none wishing to assume the role of servant. In that sandy country feet-washing was almost a necessity when sandals were worn. By way of rebuke, Jesus arose from the table and performed this menial service for His disciples, telling them the import of the lesson--namely, humility--and intimating that no matter how humble a service they might be able to render to each other, they should be glad to render it.

The lesson is still with us, not as a form or ceremony to be performed, but as an illustration of a principle. Any humble act of service done to one of the Lord's brethren corresponds to this feet-washing.

THE CRISIS IN JUDAS' LIFE

The Passover Supper proceeded--the eating of the lamb with the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread, which considerably resembled thick pancakes, and which was sometimes used instead of a spoon to sop up the essence of the meat. One of the Gospels declares that Jesus began to be heavy-hearted, and then said, One of you Twelve, eating with Me as My guest, as a member of My family, is plotting My betrayal.

There may have been a double object in this statement. First, it would show the disciples that Jesus was fully aware of the premeditated betrayal. They would not, therefore, think that something had happened to Him unexpectedly, or out of the Divine

Program. Second, our Lord may have meant this as a final reproof to Judas-- to startle him, to cause him to think. At very best a traitor's course is dishonorable, but doubly so when the traitor accepts the hospitality of the one against whom he is plotting and eats his bread.

Consternation spread amongst the disciples; and one after another they asked, "Is it I?" The import of this question would be, It is not I whom You have meant! Even Judas joined in the general inquiry, "Is it I?" The Apostle John was seated next to Jesus, and St. Peter beckoned to him that he should ask the Master who was meant. It was probably a whispered inquiry, heard by Jesus only. Our Lord's whispered reply was, "It is the one to whom I will give a sop." Presently, having prepared a special sop, a mark of special interest, He handed it to Judas. Thus St. John and St. Peter knew the affair.

Apparently it was but a short time after this that Judas withdrew, the record being that "Satan entered into him." The spirit of the Evil One got complete control of him while he stopped, and weighed and balanced the matter of selling his best Friend for thirty pieces of silver. It is entirely probable, therefore, that Judas was not present when Jesus, a little later, instituted the Memorial Supper which Christians now celebrate.

THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial Supper which Jesus instituted is totally separate and distinct from the Passover Supper, and yet they are closely related; for the one was the type and the other its archetype, or higher type, with a still higher signification. In the one a literal lamb was used to typify Jesus, the Lamb of God; in the other, the archetype, the breaking of the bread represented the death of Jesus.

The Jews celebrated the birth of their nation and its deliverance from Egyptian bondage. This had its start in the passing over of their first-born when the tenth plague came upon the Egyptians. St. Paul shows us that the first-borns of Israel, spared in that Passover night, typified the Church of the First-borns, spared, or passed over, in the present time, while the night of sin prevails and before the morning of Messiah's Kingdom is ushered in.

More and more Bible students are reaching the conclusion that the Memorial of Christ's death should not be celebrated monthly or quarterly or weekly; but that it should be considered the archetype of the Jewish Passover, and should properly be celebrated annually, and at about the same time as the Jewish Passover.

We are not to understand that the Apostles comprehended the meaning of Jesus' words when He explained to them the signification of the Supper which He instituted. Rather, as He had already foretold, the Holy Spirit brought these things to their attention and enabled them to comprehend their meaning, after they had received the Pentecostal blessing and enlightenment.

Now we may see the import of Jesus' words, "This is My body, broken for you." We perceive that He could not have meant, as some have thought, that the bread was turned into His actual body and the wine into His actual blood. On the contrary, He still had His actual body and His actual blood. He could not, therefore, have meant more than to say, This bread symbolically represents My body, which is to be broken for you; and this wine represents My blood, which is to be shed for you tomorrow--My life given up.

Neither should we think that Jesus meant that special virtue would result to the disciples from the eating of that bread and the drinking of that literal cup. We should properly look far beyond these things, and see that He meant this: Only as you by faith partake of the merits secured by My death can you have the great blessing provided for you as My disciples. The Apostles believed that the death of Jesus was for their sins, and that it constituted the basis of their acceptance with the Heavenly Father. They realized that only as they appropriated the life of Christ would they be truly the recipients of all these blessings.

St. Paul points out for us another important signification of this bread and cup. He declares the oneness of Christ and His Church. He tells us that there is but the one Loaf and the one Cup. Primarily, this Loaf was Christ Jesus; but in a secondary sense all the followers of Christ, after having been justified through His Sacrifice, are privileged to become members of His Body, parts of the one Loaf that is being broken. Likewise, after partaking of the merit of Christ's blood, His sacrifice, all of His true followers are counted as members with Him and as participators in that one Cup.

Hear the Apostle's words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one Bread, and one Body; for we are partakers of that one Bread."-- *1 Corinthians 10:16,17.*

THE SEALING OF THE NEW COVENANT

Jesus spoke of the cup, the fruit of the vine, as representing the blood of the New Covenant. The Law Covenant was the Old Covenant, which failed to bring the blessings to the Jews, because they could not keep it. Hence, also, they were not qualified to bless the other nations of the earth. But God promised a New Covenant, a better one, which would be introduced by a new and higher, or superior, Mediator than Moses. That New Covenant, God declares, will accomplish what the old Law Covenant failed to accomplish; for the New Law Covenant will be inaugurated by Messiah, its Mediator, at His Second Advent. His Kingdom, established in power and great glory, will rule, bless and instruct mankind, and will "take away

the stony heart and will give a heart of flesh" to all who will respond to those blessed opportunities.

Jesus' death constituted the blood which seals, or makes efficacious, that New Covenant. But mark further: The Church is not to be blessed under that New Covenant of the Millennial Age, which will be inaugurated at the Second Coming of Jesus, at the establishment of His Kingdom. The Church is to be blessed in advance of that New Covenant. Indeed, their consecrated lives (blood), accepted by our Lord, are counted in as a part of His own sacrifice, which seals the New Covenant. Hence the New Covenant cannot be fully sealed until the entire Body of Christ, which is the Church, shall have shared with Him in the drinking of His Cup--in the sacrifice of earthly rights, privileges, life itself.

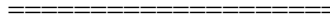
THE COVENANT OF SACRIFICE

Meantime, we see that Jesus and the Church receive their reward neither under the Law Covenant nor under the New Covenant, but under a special Covenant, called a Covenant of Sacrifice. Reference is made to this Covenant of Christ and the Church in the Psalms, where the Lord is represented as saying, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (*Psalm 50:5*.) The gathering of those who enter into this special Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord has been in progress for now over eighteen

hundred years. We have every reason to believe that the sacrifice is nearly completed, and that soon all the sacrificers, members of the Body of Christ, will be glorified, changed by the power of the First Resurrection and will enter into the joys of their Lord, according to His promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."

Our Lord indicated that He would no longer drink of the Cup; nor did He. His work, His drinking of the Cup, was finished the next day, on Calvary. There He completed the drinking of the Cup which the Father had poured for Him. The Father has poured the same Cup for all the followers of Jesus; and they must drink of His Cup, as well as partake of the merits of His broken Body, if they would be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, soon to be established.

This was the import of our Lord's words to St. James and St. John, His disciples, when they asked for special places in the Kingdom. Jesus asked, "Are ye able [willing] to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They heartily declared their willingness. Jesus assured them that they should have their request; that if they were willing, He would see to it that they would drink of His Cup. And so it is with all of His followers. The Scriptures assure them, saying, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to His purpose."



Chapter 8: The Day of the Crucifixion:

[Matthew 27]

27:1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

27:2 And when they had bound him, they led [him] away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

27:3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

27:4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What [is that] to us? see thou [to that].

27:5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

27:6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

27:7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

27:8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

27:9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

27:10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

27:11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

27:12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

27:13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

27:14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

27:15 Now at [that] feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

27:16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

27:17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

27:18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

27:19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

27:20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

27:21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

27:22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? [They] all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

27:23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

27:24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but [that] rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed [his] hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye [to it].

27:25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood [be] on us, and on our children.

27:26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered [him] to be crucified.

27:27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band [of soldiers].

27:28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

27:29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put [it] upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

27:30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

27:31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify [him].

27:32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

27:33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

27:34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted [thereof], he would not drink.

27:35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

27:36 And sitting down they watched him there;
27:37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.
27:38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.
27:39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,
27:40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.
27:41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking [him], with the scribes and elders, said,
27:42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.
27:43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.
27:44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.
27:45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.
27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
27:47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard [that], said, This [man] calleth for Elias.
27:48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled [it] with vinegar, and put [it] on a reed, and gave him to drink.
27:49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.
27:50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.
27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

CHOOSE YE THIS DAY.

--MARK 15:1-15.--JUNE 5.--

Golden Text:--"Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man."--Luke 23:4.

HOW MUCH depends upon our proper decision of the questions of life as they come before us day by day is well illustrated in this lesson. When our Lord and the eleven apostles left the upper room for the garden of Gethsemane, Judas--who earlier in the evening had reached a decision--had left their company to conspire with the chief priests, etc., and to guide their followers and servants to where Jesus could be apprehended quietly in the night, without the knowledge of the multitude in the city at that time for the Passover occasion. For the friends of Jesus, it was anticipated, might arouse a commotion amongst the throng of people, which might make the religious rulers of the Jews appear to be seditious, the Romans always being very much alert at such times for the suppression of any indications of revolt against the Roman authority. Judas doubtless had already conferred with the chief priests, and was probably present at the Passover Supper, partly for the purpose of learning the direction which Jesus and the others would take after the Supper. Our Lord's words to him, "What thou doest do quickly," seemed to imply that the matter was already arranged, and that Jesus by supernatural power was aware of it. That was the moment of final decision for Judas. He was a money lover, and decided to sell his Lord for money. Perhaps indeed he surmised that Jesus could deliver himself, and possibly he thought to gain the money without our Lord being injured; but in any event it shows a baseness of character and willingness to do evil for selfish reasons that remind us very much of the Prophet Balaam, who so greatly desired Balaam's rewards of iniquity.

BARTERING THE TRUTH FOR POTTAGE.

This matter of selling the Lord for money cannot be practised today in the same manner in which Judas practised it, yet we believe there is somewhat of the same ignoble spirit manifested by some in our day. It perhaps does not go to the same extent, but it is of the same kind, and who knows but that under favorable conditions it might be willing to go to the same length? We refer to some who are willing to sell the Truth for financial profit, for social advantage, for money; and others willing to sell the members of the Lord's body as Judas sold the Head, for earthly advantage, to deliver one another up to evil, to assist in bringing evil, tribulation, adversity, reproaches, etc., upon the members of the body of Christ. Yet with each of these, as with Judas, there was a time when they were perfectly innocent of such base ingratitude and wicked designs;

there was a time when neither self-love, nor money love, nor any other consideration would have moved them to do injury to members of the anointed body. Let us beware of the little things which, like a switch upon a railway, turn a train into an entirely different track, and may let us off far from the goal we at first desired to reach. We cannot be too careful in the way we meet the trials and testings of character which come to us daily, and whose determination means so much to us respecting the present and the future life.

Our Lord, as he went with his disciples from the upper room and crossed the brook Cedron to the Mount of Olives, to the garden of Gethsemane, was likewise entering--a trial. His trial was from the opposite standpoint to that of Judas; his hour was fully determined, his consecration was completed, he wavered not in respect to the work he had come into the world to accomplish, he had no thought of anything else than dying for our sins. But as he stood upon the brink of death and realized that in a few hours the whole matter of his consecration, his "baptism into death," would be "finished," two matters presented themselves forcefully to his attention. One was that he perceived clearly that his arraignment would take place before the Roman tribunal--that his death would be according to the Roman form, by crucifixion--that, in order to secure his condemnation by the Roman government, the chief priests and scribes, his enemies, would misrepresent his character and teachings, and that his record before the world would stand as that of a blasphemer against God and an evil worker amongst men.

We have no doubt that there are characters in the world who would measurably gloat over an opportunity to suffer as outlaws and desperadoes; they would feel themselves more or less heroes, and would be regarded more or less as heroes amongst their own class, similarly depraved in mind. But for those of more refined temperament--for the upright and honorable and pure in design--to pass through the same experiences would be a terrible ordeal. We may well imagine that our dear Redeemer, perfect, and with sentiments not in the slightest degree degraded, would feel the shame and ignominy of his position in such circumstances more than any of us could do. It was this shame, this reproach of being executed as a blasphemer against God and an injurious person amongst men, that we believe our Lord referred to as the cup which he prayed might, if possible, pass from

him, saying at the same time, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

"OF THE PEOPLE THERE WAS NONE WITH HIM."

That sad hour in Gethsemane's garden, his disciples asleep, unable to appreciate the situation as he did, was the most trying hour of our dear Redeemer's experience. Added to the cup of grief and shame and ignominy came the thought that it is written in the Law, "Cursed is every one who hangeth on a tree," and thus he would be held up and marked amongst all the people of God as being accursed. A further thought was: "Is it possible that I have failed to meet the entire demand of the Law perfectly? Is it possible that I have failed in some little particular, and that thus the curse of the Law of God is to rest upon me, and that I shall lose life entirely after having striven to do the will of the Father and the fulfilment of perfect manhood under the divine Law?"

The strain upon the nervous system became so intense as to produce a bloody sweat, a form of illness very rare indeed and yet not unknown to medical men. This was the greatest agony of all. If he had failed in the slightest degree he had no future, but all of his bright prospects of returning to the Father's love and favor and heavenly conditions by a resurrection would all be vitiated. The Apostle refers to this saying, how in the days of his flesh he offered up strong cryings and prayers unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death, and who was heard in that he feared. (*Heb. 5:7.*) He was heard in respect to that he feared: he was delivered from death by a resurrection. More than that, he was delivered from the fear of death, from all doubt as respected his faithfulness to the Father's will and his acceptance of the Father down to that very moment. An angel, a heavenly messenger, appeared and strengthened him, comforting him and assuring him of the Father's love and care, and that he was well pleasing in his sight. Such an assurance to the loyal heart of Jesus was all that was necessary. He could go through any experience courageously while confident that the Father was well pleased with his course, and that the result would be his reattainment of the glories he had left when he came into the world to be our Redeemer, and the attainment also of all the other joys set before him in the Father's promises. Here was a trial upon a great heart that resulted in great blessing to himself as well as to others. The result of his trial was the peace, joy and confidence which, during that night and the next day, kept him the most calm of all, even to his dying moment, and which, as the Apostle declares, led to his glorification in the resurrection, and which eventually shall bring blessings to every member of the

human family in the lifting of the curse, the right to lift which was secured by his faithfulness even unto death.

BETRAYED BY A PROFESSED FRIEND.

Presently Judas arrived on the scene with a company of the high priest's servants--not followers in the ordinary sense of the term, but court followers, resembling more the police of the present time. Some of them carried swords and some carried clubs, as our Lord's language to them indicates. Peter and another of the apostles had swords with them--a not unusual matter in those times, though unusual for the apostles, as the context shows. They doubtless had the swords with them to demonstrate that our Lord was not taken contrary to his own will. He had with him eleven able-bodied men, willing to lay down their lives at his command in his defence. One of these, Peter, drew his sword and smote off the ear of the high priest's servant, and doubtless the defence would have been carried on vigorously if our Lord had said the word, or rather had he not interfered by intimating to Peter that what he had done was enough. He bade him put up his sword --he was not to battle for his Lord with carnal weapons --and meantime healed the wounded ear. Our Lord, in surrendering himself, stipulated that his apostles were not included in the arrest.

Thus awakened, surprised, dismissed by the Lord, his disciples saw him taken from them, and were bewildered and confounded, notwithstanding our Lord's words to them on several occasions previously, intimating that some such calamity might be expected. It was a trial to them at the time, as the Master had already intimated, saying, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." They had not sufficiently appreciated his words, had slept while the trial hour was coming on, and were, therefore, the less prepared for it.

Our Lord, his hands bound, was led away to Annas and Caiaphas. Although it was night time, about one o'clock, some of the chief officers of the Jews and the Sanhedrin had gathered, being informed that the arrest would take place that night, that one of his disciples would pilot the officers to take him, and the matter was urgent, so that his death could take place as quickly as possible on the next day, before the people in general learned about the matter and before the Passover week would begin. It was not lawful to try a man for any capital offence between sundown and sunrise, and hence this trial was in one sense an informal one--it would be required to be ratified by the Sanhedrin after sunrise. They were willing, however, to come as near as possible to breaking the Law that thus they might accomplish their purposes.

THE VILE CHARGE OF BLASPHEMY.

As he stood before the high priest, and as his enemies brought witnesses and the trial progressed, our Lord may be said to have made no defence; it would have been useless anyway, as they were intent on finding a charge of some kind--they had murder in their hearts. The charge they sought to establish was blasphemy, one of the few charges the penalty of which under the Law was death, and it was his death they wanted. The blasphemy against God was declared to be proven in that he claimed to be the son of God, and blasphemy against the Temple was claimed to be proven in that some had heard him say that if the Temple were destroyed he could rear it again in three days. A decision was reached, but nothing could be done until day light. Meantime the petty officers of the court spat upon the Lord, blindfolded him, and struck him, saying, "Prophecy, now, who is he that smote thee?" and thus the weary hours passed till daybreak. The Jews thought it a trial of the Lord, but his trial was all in the past. It was the trial of their high priests, of the court officers and of the members of the Sanhedrin and of the Jewish nation. It was a trial of whether they loved truth or a falsehood, righteousness or unrighteousness. They decided for unrighteousness.

Meantime the Apostle Peter was having a great trial, too. He had gained access to the outer room of the court and could probably hear or see something from where he stood and warmed himself at the fire. The first instinct of nature, self-preservation, overpowered him. It flashed upon him that if he were recognized as one of Jesus' subordinates he might be treated in the same manner as the Master, and in his desire to avoid the troubles that had come upon Jesus he denied that he knew him, and on a second occasion of the same kind he even swore that he did not know him. Poor Peter! It was a time of severe trial, and, alas he failed. How he might have gloried afterwards if he had suffered something for Christ's sake and for his acknowledgment of being his follower! But had he done so, all of the Lord's followers since would have lost a very valuable lesson conveyed to us in Peter's experiences.

Peter's weakness on this occasion, afterwards so bitterly lamented and acknowledged and forgiven, has in some respects been a great blessing to all of the Lord's followers as they found that they, too, had weaknesses, and that sometimes they were overtaken in a fault as was Peter. They have learned from Peter to weep bitterly for these shortcomings, and have not been utterly cast down when they have found that Peter was received again by the Lord and heartily forgiven, and that the lesson thus learned made a deep impression on his life and resulted evidently in his favor. It is related of Peter that ever after

this he arose every morning at cock crowing, made a fresh remembrance before the Lord of his weakness on that occasion, and accepted divine forgiveness. It was a testing time to Peter, and so similarly testing times come to all of us. Let us see to it that under no circumstances shall we ever deny our Lord. More than this, let us remember that the Lord places himself and his Word and his brethren on a par, and assures us that those who deny his Truth deny him, and those who deny his Word of prophecy are thus denying him.

TREASON AGAINST ROME.

With sunrise the Sanhedrin met officially, and, accepting the testimony of the high priest, that he had examined witnesses and that it had been proven that Jesus had blasphemed God and the Temple, the verdict was reached that he should die. Then, as related in our lesson, they held a private consultation respecting how they should present the matter before Pilate, the Roman governor. They well knew that he would pay no attention whatever to their charges of blasphemy and would tell them that was not a crime under the Roman law. They determined that the charge against our Lord before Pilate should be treason against the Roman government. In support of this charge of treason they said that he declared there was another king besides Caesar, namely, himself, the Messiah; and to seemingly corroborate this they declared falsely that he had forbidden to pay taxes to Caesar's government, whereas when they tried to catch him on this very subject two days before he had answered to the contrary, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Moreover, he had paid taxes himself, Peter being sent for the fish to pay the tax for them both. But this false allegation would seemingly prove the truth of the original charge of treason.

Now Pilate's time had come for trial. He stood as judge, and the principles of right and wrong, truth and untruth, righteousness and unrighteousness, in this case were for him to determine. What a wonderful chance he had! Suppose he had refused to connive at the malice of the high priest when he recognized that it was "for envy they had delivered him." Suppose that Pilate had dismissed the high priest and Sanhedrin and the multitude and had set Jesus free, and had cautioned them that if any of them did him injury they would be answerable with their lives! What a noble picture it would have been before the eyes of history! But, instead, his course and reputation have been anything but commendable and admirable. Nevertheless, while recognizing that he thus had a test and that he failed to take the noble part, we are far from sharing with the

majority in their very ignominious view of this governor.

We are to remember that Pilate was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a heathen man--without God and having no hope in the world. We are to remember that he did not believe in the Jews' religion, whatever he may have believed. He did not believe in Jesus, nor had he any respect for the Messianic promises. He was filling the office of governor as the representative of Caesar's government at Rome. He had his own pleasures and self-gratifications distinct from the Jews and their festivals, etc., for which he cared nothing. He was amenable not to our God, for he knew him not, but merely to Caesar, and Caesar expected nothing of him except that he would preserve the peace and quiet of the city and maintain the dignity and authority of Rome. Rome cared not if one or ten or hundreds of innocent persons were put to death, if only the peace of the country were maintained. It was, therefore, Pilate's first duty as Roman governor to keep the peace in Jerusalem.

ART THOU THE KING OF THE JEWS?

From this standpoint we can say that Pilate's course was noble and just--though not the noble and just one which we would have preferred for him. Pilate did not readily accept the charges of the Pharisees: he knew them to be hypocritical, and really we may here say that the worst wickedness in the world at any time, at every time, in its history has been that form of wickedness which parades under the cloak of religion, which does evil in the name of that which is right, true, good. Pilate asked for specifications respecting the treason, and this seems to have surprised the chief priests, who presumed that their word would be taken on that subject without proof. If they thought a Jew had been worthy of death for treason then Pilate should certainly so suspect and so believe, for they were not supposed to wish the destruction of any fellow-Jew on such a charge. Pilate looked at Jesus and saw in him no criminal appearance, saw that he did not look at all like one who would become a leader of sedition; that, instead, meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, love, were marks of his features. Pilate inquired of Jesus respecting this charge, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" Our Lord's answer was not quite equivalent to yes, and yet it intimated that he did not wish to dispute the charge. To have attempted to explain the Kingdom of God under such circumstances would have been improper, for none there were prepared to hear and appreciate or understand; to have done so would have been in conflict with our Lord's own instruction on the subject, not to cast pearls before swine. Those present were not prepared to understand that the Kingdom would come a

spirit Kingdom, that it would have earthly representatives, etc.

Meantime the chief priests accused him fiercely, Jesus saying nothing--"He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." He was not there to defend himself, nor to protest against his execution. On the contrary, he was there to sacrifice his life, to lay it down, to permit it to be taken from him without resistance. Pilate himself marveled that anyone could be so indifferent to the results of his trial. All this, however, proved the more conclusively that there was nothing dangerous to the interests of Rome in connection with our Lord's life or teachings: it all disproved what the chief priests were charging, and demonstrated that they had some ulterior malevolent spirit of opposition to Jesus.

PREFERRING BARABBAS TO JESUS.

There had been a real sedition, a genuine movement against the authority of Rome, at a previous time, and Barabbas and others had been made prisoners on account of it. Some one in the crowd started a call on the governor to do as was his custom every year at this time--to release some prisoner as a matter of clemency and favor. Soon the whole mob took it up, and Pilate inquired, "Shall I then release unto you the king of the Jews?"--Jesus. His thought evidently was to arouse in them to some extent an enthusiasm in favor of his liberation of Jesus, for we read that he perceived that it was the chief priests and not the multitudes that were against Jesus. He hoped to turn the rabble to the side of Jesus and to release him on their request. But the chief priests, who had accused Jesus, stirred up the multitude to request the release of Barabbas, the seditionist, the rioter. One wonders that they were not ashamed in the presence of even a heathen governor to manifest their perfidy in this manner --to accuse Jesus of being a traitor to Rome and asking to have him crucified and in the same breath to urge the release of one about whose rioting there was no question.

Pilate evidently heard something said about Jesus' work being largely done in Galilee, and thought to be rid of the matter by turning the case over to Herod, the ruler of Galilee, who was present in Jerusalem at the time. He therefore sent Jesus bound to Herod, with the explanation that, as he was a Galilean, Pilate was pleased to acknowledge Herod and to submit the case to his adjudication. Really he was glad to be rid of the case, for he preferred not to put to death an innocent man, yet he perceived that the chief priests could make very violent charges against him if he refused to put to death one whom they charged with treason against the

Roman government. At Rome such conduct would have the appearance of favoring rebellion; and if Pilate should reply that there was no danger of rebellion, that the man was merely a quiet, innocent man, they would have probably responded that he was entirely too particular anyway, that he should be prompt in the execution of anybody and everybody charged with the slightest degree with rebellion in word or act against the Roman power. Thus, no doubt, he would have lost his position and would have been degraded for the remainder of life. Pilate was in a very trying position.

HEROD'S OPPORTUNITY AND FAILURE.

The coming of Jesus to Herod meant a trial for Herod. How would he receive Jesus? What would be his conduct toward righteousness and truth and justice and purity and goodness? This is the same Herod who about a year and a half before had beheaded John the Baptist, and who, hearing of Jesus, had suggested that he might be a reincarnation of John. Herod, we are told, was glad to see Jesus and hoped to see him perform some miracle of which he had heard so much; but the Lord was absolutely silent before him, not a word had he to say before such a man. Such a course was probably the most striking rebuke he could have administered to Herod, and was entirely in line with the whole conduct of our Lord--his determination to do nothing that would hinder the accomplishment of that which he knew to be the divine purpose--his death that very day.

Finding that Jesus would not even reply for him, nor perform any miracles for his entertainment, Herod suggested to his men of war that they robe him as a king and have some sport with him, as it seems was a custom of that time in respect to criminals--the soldiers were granted opportunity to give them mock homage and then to buffet them, etc., before they were executed. This done to Jesus he was returned to Pilate, Herod in turn expressing his appreciation of Pilate's course, but declining to interfere in Pilate's territory. From that time Pilate and Herod were friends, though previously they had been adversaries.

"DO NOTHING AGAINST THIS JUST MAN."

The case returning to Pilate, and the chief priests evidently fearing some slip of their plans, were very persistent in demanding the death of Jesus and in inciting the multitude to clamor for it. Some six times in all Pilate declared the innocence of Jesus, yet under the circumstances already narrated he hesitated to absolutely refuse the demand of the Jewish priests and multitude: especially did he feel the point of the argument made by the priests, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend," which meant, You are an enemy to Caesar and

to the government of Rome. Pilate realized that such a course would not be understood by his superiors, and hence he tried every method to get the Jews satisfied in the matter. One step in this proceeding was to order that Jesus should be scourged. He hoped that the scourging would satisfy his adversaries' thirst for blood. Meantime Pilate's wife sent a message to him urging that he do nothing against this man, for that she had had a dream in the night to this effect. Under the circumstances Pilate evidently did everything that could be expected of a worldly man in the times and under the conditions in which he lived. The only exception to such a procedure that we could expect would be on the part of a Christian, or of some one who under Christian influence had gained a much more than ordinary love for justice, and willingness to sacrifice every interest in its behalf.

It was in connection with his endeavor to free Jesus from those who sought his life that Pilate stood Jesus forth so that they might see him, exclaiming, "Behold the man!" The impression we get is that Pilate himself was struck with the quiet dignity of our Lord in his facial expression, in his composure under trying conditions. His words seem to mean, Look at the man you are talking about crucifying! Why, Jews, you have not such a man in all your land. I doubt if there is any man his equal anywhere! But it was all of no avail; the multitude had become excited and were clamoring for our Lord's blood. In the expressive symbolic language of the time, Pilate, before delivering Jesus for crucifixion, indicated that he was averse to the sentence they were compelling him to pronounce, and that wherever the responsibility lay he was not the guilty party. He did this by washing his hands with water in the presence of the people, exclaiming, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person."--*Matt. 27:24.*

THE RESULT OF THESE TRIALS-- RETRIBUTION.

What a number of trials, testings and provings we have found in this lesson--and now let us briefly glance at the results. Judas, as a result of failure in his trial, died soon by his own hand. Pilate, the unwilling instrument of the condemnation and not one hundredth part as guilty as the Jews, shortly afterwards lost his commission as governor and in despondency committed suicide. Annas, the high priest, was subsequently dragged through the streets, scourged and murdered. The multitude who cried out, "Crucify him!" and who in answer to Pilate's declaration that he was innocent of the blood of Jesus, declared, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," experienced

a baptism of blood not many years after when the entire city of Jerusalem was a scene of most horrible atrocities, which culminated in the utter destruction of their city with great loss of life, in the overflow of the entire Jewish polity in Palestine, and the scattering of the survivors amongst all nations and peoples. The curse they thus brought upon themselves still remains to some extent; his blood is still upon them, and from that day until the present time the Jews have suffered greatly; and although the divine disfavor has been passing from them as a nation since 1878, it will continue in some measure until nearly or quite 1914. The curse will be remitted because of its being forgiven through the grace of God in Christ.

On the other hand, note the blessings which came to those whose testings were received in the proper manner, demonstrating their loyalty to the Lord. Our Lord Jesus was highly exalted, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named-- because faithful unto death, even the death of the cross. Peter the Apostle, although partially overtaken in a fault, nevertheless through repentance and bitter tears was accepted back again to the Lord's favor, profited by his sad experience, and became one of the noblest of the apostles, one of the most honored, and is yet to be honored in the Kingdom as joint-heir with his Redeemer.

THINK NOT STRANGE YOUR FIERY TRIALS.

We are not to expect similar trials, in all respects like those of our lesson, but we are to expect fiery trials, and we are to note that the results will be in accord with the manner in which we meet them. The lesson to us is that we should follow in the footsteps of Jesus and resolve to be faithful to our heavenly Father, to do his will at any cost, at any sacrifice of earthly interests --not grudgingly, but, as expressed prophetically of our Lord, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy Law is written in my heart." Another lesson is that if temporarily we should stumble in following the Master we must not be discouraged, but turn the failure and stumbling into a

blessing by permitting it to bring us into closer relationship to the Lord and to make us more and more careful and more faithful in our walk with the Lord henceforth.

Some one has said: "This scene has often been alleged as a self-condemnation of democracy. *Vox populi, vox Dei* (The voice of the people is the voice of God), its flatterers have said; but look yonder. When the multitude has to choose between Jesus and Barabbas, it chooses Barabbas. If this be so, the scene is equally decisive against aristocracy. Did the priests, scribes and nobles behave any better than the mob? It was by their advice that the mob chose Barabbas." This is a very wise and a very truthful suggestion. The voice of the people can be relied upon in some matters, and, on the whole, the republican form of government is probably the best of any in the world for civilized peoples under present conditions; but as respects religious things the voice of the people is far from being the voice of God. On the contrary, the Apostle declared, "The world by wisdom knows not God." It must not, therefore, prejudice our judgments to find the popular voice against us. What we seek for and listen for is the voice of the Lord through his Word. With this let us be satisfied as was our Redeemer, content whatever lot we see since it is our God who leadeth us. It is possible that the closing scenes of the Church's experience may in some respects resemble that of our dear Redeemer; it is possible that some of the Lord's people may be branded as blasphemers and hailed before governments on the charges of preaching Christ as another King. Should it ever come to such a pass, we should have no doubt whatever respecting our position. It should be that of full confidence in the Lord, and through faithfulness to him, to his Word, and to all the brethren. Let us leave the outcome of these trials and testings in the hands of the Lord, assured by his Word that he will make these afflictions to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

[R3369 : page 155]

HOW AND WHY CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED.

--MARK 15:22-39.--JUNE 12.--

Golden Text:--"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."--I Cor. 15:3

VICTOR HUGO wrote, "Waterloo is the change of form of the universe." Another amends the statement thus, "Calvary is the change of form of the universe." The story of our

Lord's crucifixion is related with a pathos which stirs our souls with sympathy, and begets in us a responsive love from the moment we truly recognize the purport of our Golden Text. Others have died just as cruelly,

and a few have gone to death voluntarily and composedly. The Lord's death, however, was the first one in which the victim was entirely innocent, entirely unworthy of the death sentence,--the only one, therefore, in whose case the matter of dying was wholly voluntary, the only one who needed not to die had he not so willed.

CROSS-BEARING EXEMPLIFIED.

The evangelists relate the incidents of the crucifixion with very slight variations, and the whole matter is before us when we group together the various statements, each of which is true. From Pilate's Judgment Hall, after the governor had consented to Jesus' death because unable to stem the tide of Jewish prejudice and vociferous demands, the centurion, with three Roman soldiers, took Jesus to Calvary to crucify him. As was the custom, the culprit--in this case the victim-- bore his own cross, which must necessarily have been a terrible task. Our Lord apparently was overcome by the weight of the cross, when a countryman named Simon coming along was forced to assist him. The statement of *Luke 23:26* implies that Simon did not carry the cross entirely, but merely assisted Jesus, carrying the hinder part of it, which usually dragged.

We have often wondered, Where were Peter and John and James that they did not see the Master's burden and run to proffer assistance? If disposed to envy Simon his privilege of assisting the Master in the bearing of the cross, let us reflect that many of the Lord's brethren are daily bearing symbolic crosses, and that it is our privilege to assist them, and that the Lord agrees to reckon any service done to his faithful followers as though it were rendered to his own person. Yet if no brother sees the privilege of giving a helping hand let not the burdened ones lose heart. The Lord knoweth the need and will send the aid necessary, even though it be impressed, and that because of the sympathy of the worldly--as in Jesus' case, when the soldiers provided the aid. As the wooden cross was not our Lord's heaviest burden, so, too, his followers have crosses which the world sees not, but which the "brethren" should understand. "Bear ye one another's burdens and thus fulfil the law of Christ."

Sympathetic Jewish women walked near, weeping. Quite probably these included Mary, our Lord's mother, Martha and Mary of Bethany, and Mary Magdalene. The particulars are not given us, but the sympathy of woman is markedly testified to. Our Lord was full of composure, though weak and fainting, not only because of the expenditure of his vitality previously in the healing of the sick, etc., but additionally because he had been under a most terrible nervous strain throughout the entire night, without

sleep or food. It was now nine o'clock of the day of his crucifixion, and he had wearily borne a share of the weight of his cross for about three-quarters of a mile, from Pilate's Judgment Hall to Calvary. Golgotha, the name usually given to this place by the people of the vicinity, signified "the place of a skull," because that particular slope of the hill very closely resembled a skull in shape and in color, dark crevices in the face of the rock corresponding to the eye sockets, nose cavity, etc.

The offering of wine mingled with bitter myrrh, otherwise styled gall, was not an indignity as is usually supposed, but an act of kindness. A Women's Society for the Relief of the Suffering furnished sour wine with bitter narcotics with a view to deadening the sensibility to pain, and it was customary to provide this draught for all the poor unfortunates to reduce their terrible sufferings to a minimum. Our Lord tasted the wine, Matthew informs us, doing so probably to assure himself of what it was, or as a token of his appreciation of the kindness expressed by it. But he refused to drink of it, evidently preferring to experience the full measure of the pain and suffering which the Father's wisdom and love and justice had prepared for him--had permitted to come upon him as a test of the full measure of his loyalty and obedience.

The crucifixion must have been a terrible ordeal. The cross was laid upon the ground and the victim stretched upon it, while the nails were driven through the feet and hands; and if possible a still more trying moment came when the cross, lifted by sturdy men, was allowed to drop into the socket prepared for it in the rock. Very properly the evangelist did not stop to detail or comment upon the extreme suffering experienced by the Lord, and very properly we may similarly leave the matter. Nevertheless, our hearts can but ache still when we think of what this part of the redemption price paid for our sins cost the One who bought us with his precious blood. He who grasps the situation clearly will be the more willing to suffer something for the Lord's sake and for his cause' sake--thus to testify in return his love and his appreciation of the great things done for him by the Son of God. Indeed we should esteem it a deprivation if not permitted to "suffer with him," for otherwise we could not hope to "reign with him."

TWO PROPHECIES FULFILLED.

It was the custom to count the personal property of an executed person the perquisites of the soldiers performing the execution, and in Jesus' case we read that, having divided his garments amongst them, his outer robe, his head dress, sandals and girdle--enough to give one piece to each--they assigned by lot "what each man should take." One piece remained, namely, his tunic or under garment, reaching from the neck to

the feet, "woven throughout and seamless." This they could not divide advantageously, and hence "for his vesture they did cast lots."--*Psa. 22:18; John 19:23,24.*

The crucifixion took place at the third hour, Jewish reckoning, or nine o'clock, our reckoning. Over his head was his accusation written in three languages--the Latin, the official or governmental language of Rome; in Greek, the classical language of that period; in Hebrew, the language of the Jews. The charge was that upon which the chief priests had laid special stress in their arraignment of Jesus, that he claimed to be the king of the Jews. Elsewhere we are informed that the prominent Jews objected to Pilate's inscription and endeavored to have it altered, but he refused, saying, "What I have written, I have written." The Jews would have written, "This is an impostor claiming to be the king of the Jews," but in the Lord's providences the true title was put above his head, "Jesus, the King of the Jews." Those of us who are not Jews have reason to rejoice that he is more than this--that by God's providence he is heir of the world and is surely to be the King of the world, and is already King of saints.

How it happened that two robbers were awaiting execution at the same time is not stated in the account. We may presume, however, that they had been in custody for some time under sentence, and that the chief priests may have suggested their execution at the same time. Their thought may have been to detract from the injustice of their own course and to throw a measure of justice into the proceedings as a whole, or their object may have been to demean Jesus in making him a companion of outlaws. But whatever the circumstances the matter was foreseen by the Lord and foretold by the Prophet--"He was numbered with the transgressors." --*Isa. 53:12.*

"WE DID ESTEEM HIM STRICKEN, SMITTEN OF GOD."

Near the cross stood the Apostle John and Jesus' mother and others who loved him, and whose hearts were breaking with sympathy as they beheld his ignominy and suffering and were unable to fully appreciate the necessity for this, as we shall shortly see it. Some few idlers were standing by probably, while travelers were coming and going, because Golgotha was on a frequented route. Apparently many of these, who had heard much about Jesus and his miracles, were now satisfied that his claims were false, and that probably his miracles were deceptions wrought, as the Pharisees said, by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils. These reasoned from analogy that if the Lord had done the works ascribed to him by the power of God, as he claimed, he would not need to be at the mercy of his enemies, for it never occurred to them that any one would voluntarily lay down his life for his

friend-- neither did they have the slightest conception of the necessity or object of the Lord's death.

A similar mistake is made by the world in respect to the Lord's followers. Those who have sorrows and trials and persecutions and poverty they esteem to be under divine disfavor. Thus it was prophesied of our Lord, but is true of his Church, his body as a whole--"We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted," and we were ashamed of him. The world cannot discern, as we do, that God's favor toward the elect is manifested in letting them have those experiences necessary to their preparation for Kingdom honors.

"NONE OF THE WICKED SHALL UNDERSTAND."

Our Lord's statement of a few days before was remembered by some, but either misunderstood or deliberately falsified in their raillery. He had not spoken of destroying their Temple, but had said that if they destroyed the Temple it would be reared again within three days (antitypical). The Temple construction had required about forty years, and our Lord's declaration they considered bombastic, and said, It will be much easier for him to show his power by coming down from the cross. The fact that he did not do so was esteemed an evidence of the falsity of all that he had previously said and done. To a sensitive mind, like that of our Lord, we can readily suppose that such a charge of falsification and misrepresentation would be a severe burden upon his heart; yet he bore it patiently. O, we are so glad that Jesus did not come down from the cross, and thus leave us in our sins--the whole world unredeemed!

The chief priests and scribes pursued their victim to the cross--neglecting, doubtless, important matters in their eagerness to make sure that he did not escape them. They were more blameworthy than the common people, yet they sought to justify their course in the same manner. Strangely enough, they admitted that "he saved others;" and the fact that he did not save himself out of their grasp seems to have been to them conclusive evidence of the falsity of all of his claims as respected relationship to Jehovah God. They were satisfied that his blood should be upon them and upon their children. Poor men! they thought themselves wise, yet, as the Apostle Peter pointed out a few days subsequently, the whole matter was done in ignorance. Peter's words are, "I wot, brethren, that ye did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers." It is fortunate for these--yea, for the great majority of mankind--that the Lord our God is not the resentful One he is represented to be; that on the contrary he is "long suffering and of plenteous mercy." In full accord with this is the glorious prophecy that eventually those who crucified the Lord shall look upon him whom they pierced and

mourn because of him, and that "the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication and they shall mourn for him."

WHEN REVILED HE REVILED NOT IN RETURN.

The Apostle points out our Lord's patience under this reviling as an example to us. When he was reviled he reviled not in return. How many cutting things our Lord might *truthfully* have thrown back at his persecutors. The secret of his patience was expressed in his words to Pilate: "Thou couldst have no power over me at all except it were given thee of my Father." The same thought is expressed in the words: "The cup that my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" Likewise our ability to take reviling and persecution patiently and unresentfully will be in proportion as our consecration to the Lord is full and complete, and in proportion as we realize that "All the steps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord."

One of those crucified with Jesus reviled him also--perhaps both, but probably only one--the other for a time keeping silent, but afterward speaking in defence of Jesus, as is related in another Gospel. The morning, which had opened very bright, became very cloudy, and the darkness from the sixth hour (12 o'clock noon) until the ninth hour (3 o'clock), when Jesus died, was quite noticeable.

It was at the close of his experiences, at 3 P.M., that Jesus cried aloud with a strong voice, indicating considerable vitality still. His cry was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Throughout the entire experience of the night and the morning, from the time he had the assurance, in the Garden of Gethsemane, that he was pleasing to the Father, our Lord was most cool and tranquil of mind. Why was it, then, that at the very close of his experiences he should have so dark a cloud, a shadow, between his heart and the Father? Why should the Father permit any cloud to come between on an occasion when his dear Son, well beloved, so much needed more than any other time the comfort and strength and sustenance of a clear appreciation of his love and favor? This we must answer later, when considering why our Lord was crucified.

It was at this time that our Lord had said, "I thirst," and that a sponge fastened to a hyssop stock and saturated with sour wine (*Jno. 19:29*) was lifted to his lips. From it he sucked some refreshing moisture, for by this time under such conditions his wounds must have developed a raging fever in his blood. Then Jesus cried aloud again. What he said is not recorded in Mark's account, but Luke gives it as, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit"--my life. This indicated that his faith in the Lord was absolute and that the thing he chiefly thought of was life. He was laying down his

life most loyally, most nobly, in accord with the Father's arrangement. The Father had promised him as a reward to raise him up from the dead: he trusted in this promise, and now in his dying breath he expressed his faith.

"IT IS FINISHED."

Various things are recorded as taking place at the moment of our Lord's death--an earthquake shook the ground in the neighborhood of the cross, and in the Temple at Jerusalem the great vail which separated between the Holy and Most Holy was torn, not from the bottom toward the top, as would be the expectation if it were the result of wear, but from the top to the bottom, as indicating that it was a manifestation of divine power. The vail or curtain is described as being sixty feet long and thirty feet wide, and its thickness about four inches. Josephus describes it as "of Babylonish texture, a wonderful stretch of white, scarlet and purple." The rending of this curtain represented symbolically the opening of the way between heaven itself and the heavenly condition of those in the world. Christ has opened to us a new and living way through the vail--that is to say, through the sacrifice of his flesh. True believers are represented as being now associated with Jesus as priests in the Holy, or outer apartment of the two. Here we have fellowship with God through the light of the golden candlestick, through the bread of the golden table, and through the incense that we are permitted to offer on the golden altar, and from this standpoint we can now by faith see beyond the vail--catch glimpses at least of the heavenly estate which God hath in reservation for them who love him, for the called ones according to his purpose, for the Christ, Head and body.

WHY JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED.

One of the most puzzling matters connected with Christianity in all minds, including the hypercritical of the Lord's professed followers, is why the sufferings and death of our Lord at Calvary were necessary. We answer that they were necessary because God made them necessary--because he so arranged his plan that they would be indispensable. That he could have devised another plan of salvation is beyond question, for the whole matter was in his hands, but that he did choose the best plan is equally indisputable. Whoever attempts to solve this question in his own mind or with the human philosophies of the natural mind will be sure to err. The only safe, proper course is to give heed to the wisdom that cometh from above respecting this matter.

Harkening to the voice of the Lord, we perceive that he knew the end from the beginning, and that his plan is designed to be a lesson respecting his attributes of justice, wisdom, love and power, not only to men

but to angels, not only to the unholy, but to the holy. When the divine plan shall have been fully accomplished, all shall see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of wisdom and love and justice and power exemplified in the divine arrangement. At the present time, however, only a few may see: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; he has covenanted to show it unto them."--*Psalm 25:14*.

With full knowledge that he could not retract his own sentence, God pronounced death to be the penalty for sin--knowing at the time that Adam would sin and that he and his entire family would come under the death sentence. To Adam and to all who understood the matter the case must have appeared hopeless, since, first, God could not revoke his sentence; and, second, the sentence deprived man of everything in depriving him of his life. It would not occur to man that God might have in his purpose a substitute: and even if it had occurred to him, looking about amongst his fellow men he could have found no one capable of serving as a substitute for Adam, because all were sinners through their inherited share in the results of the fall. It surely never would have occurred to man that God, looking down upon the fallen race of Adam, would have such pity for the transgressors of the law as to provide for them a way of escape from the penalty at such cost as was entailed. For God to provide a substitute for Adam meant the creation of another man, his equal in every particular, or the transfer of some holy being to a condition in nature similar to that of Adam before he fell. It would not have been supposable to man that Almighty God would be so considerate of the interests of his human creatures. Furthermore, they might have reasoned that for God to have created a man similar to Adam would have been merely to have duplicated the transgression; while for him to have transferred some glorious spirit being to human conditions would have appeared but a violation of justice--a punishment of a holy and obedient creature in the interest of unholy and sinful ones.

But behold the wisdom of God, as well as his love and justice, manifested in the course arranged for. He would provide a ransom for Adam and thus for his race; he would provide a perfect man to be the Redeemer of the fallen one and those who lost life in him, yet he would do no injustice to any. Rather he would so arrange the plan that the one who should become man's redemption would himself be greatly advantaged by the sufferings and deprivations incidental to the work. No doubt had God offered the proposition in a general way to all of the heavenly hosts there would have been many ready and willing to render joyful obedience and to trust for whatever reward and blessing the Father might think best to give

them; but he did not make the offer general--it was made to but one.

"LO, I COME--TO DO THY WILL, O MY GOD."

Amongst the heavenly hosts was the only begotten of the Father, he who in the beginning was called the Word and who was with the Father, and who himself was a God or a Mighty One, and who had been used of the Father as his instrument in the creation of all the angelic and human beings. To this one, highest of all, the Father would first make the proposition of the great sacrifice, the great test of faith in the Father's love and the Father's power--that he would restore him again when the work was finished, and that with added glory. True, the Only Begotten might have declined, and, so far as we know, without prejudice, in which event the offer or opportunity would have been given probably to the one next in honor and glory and power amongst the angels. But the Only Begotten did not decline, but joyfully accepted the offer of being a co-laborer with the Father on behalf of mankind. He carried out the project; he left the heavenly courts, laid aside the heavenly conditions, spirit body, etc., was transferred to the womb of Mary, and in due time was born a man amongst men, "the man Christ Jesus."

At thirty years, the proper period under the Law, he made his full consecration unto death and symbolized it in baptism. For three and a half years the death was being accomplished by him, until at Calvary he cried, "It is finished." Thus his first great humbling of himself in becoming a man was a preparatory step, while his giving of himself as a sacrifice, as a substitute for Adam, covered a period of three and a half years, ending in his death on the cross. He finished there the work which the Father had given him to do so far as redeeming the world was concerned. His life was the ransom price for Adam's; and since the world had lost life through Adam, because inheriting his weaknesses, his imperfections, therefore justly, legally, actually, Christ's death not only redeemed Adam, but redeemed the world of mankind. It was because Adam as a sinner was cut off from fellowship with God that our dear Redeemer, as his substitute, was obliged to have a similar experience for a little season before he died. It was his hardest moment and called forth the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In due time the Father's promise toward him was fulfilled in his resurrection from the dead, a spirit being; in due time he ascended up on high to appear in the presence of God on our behalf--to apply to each believer a share in the merit of his sacrifice. This work has progressed throughout this Gospel age, and every consecrated believer has been accepted in Christ; and, being accepted in him as a member of his body, these

believers in turn have been privileged to present their bodies living sacrifices and thus to fill up the measure of Christ's sufferings. Soon the entire Atonement Day sacrificing will be finished, soon it will be accomplished, soon the promise will be fulfilled, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him: if we be dead with him we shall also live with him." From that time onward the redemptive work takes on a larger scope. As soon as the last members of the body of Christ shall have suffered with him he will apply the full payment to Justice on behalf of all the remainder of mankind not believers, and the penalty, the curse against the world, will thus be cancelled--not through faith, not merely for those who shall have exercised faith, but regardless of faith.

THE RESULTS--THE GRACIOUS EFFECTS.

Then will begin the work of uplifting the world--those who have not yet gone into the tomb, and gradually those who already have gone down into the prison-house of death. The prison doors shall be opened, all the prisoners shall show themselves; as the Prophet declared, they will all come forth to trial. (*Isa. 61:1.*) Not to a new trial on account of the first offence by Adam, neither to a trial on account of things done while more or less affected by the penalty upon Adam, but to a new trial for life on their own responsibility. The responsibility of each shall be according to the measure of character and strength which he possesses, - it will be a righteous judgment that will make full allowance for every inherited imperfection and weakness, and that will expect from the world only that which mankind will be able to render.

The result will be an uplift of the world of mankind, an opportunity for each to come back gradually to all that was lost in Eden by Father Adam's disobedience, - including Paradise restored. The obedient of heart shall then be accounted worthy of the blessing of the Lord, to continue with them eternally. They shall have everlasting life, all contrary minded being cut off in the Second Death.

Thus seen the death of our Lord Jesus was necessary for man's release from the death sentence. Christ died for our sins, as our Golden Text expresses it. He died in order that, by paying our penalty of death, God might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, and release him from the death sentence. Our Lord's death was necessary for another reason also, as the Apostle explains: it is expedient that he who shall judge the world during the Millennial age shall have full ability to sympathize with the world of mankind who will then be on trial--one able and willing to succor those beset by sin and weakness and to have compassion on them, having been tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Thus not only the Lord Jesus, the great King and Judge of that time, but also the Church--his joint-heirs in the judgeship and in the Royal Priesthood--will be able to sympathize with those whom they will be judging and trying, sustaining, assisting and uplifting.

We perceive, then, that the plan which God adopted is in the broadest sense of the word the wisest and best imaginable, and that under this plan nothing else than death was possible in order to man's redemption from the sentence of death, and that nothing else than severe trials were appropriate for the one who would be intrusted with so high a dignity, honor, responsibility, as that which the Father had apportioned to the Christ. We see also that it behooved the Father, in bringing the Church to glory and subsequently testing the world, to prove the Captain of the salvation perfect through suffering; that he who was chief of the universe next to the Father, and whom he purposed to make so much greater still as to give him a participation in the divine nature, glory and honor--he might reasonably be expected to demonstrate before every creature his absolute loyalty to the Father; and this he did in the days of his flesh when he suffered the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. As a consequence "him hath God highly exalted and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess to the glory of the Father"--during the Millennial age.

Z '06, 363 – 366; R3895

AS DECEIVERS AND YET TRUE.

--*LUKE 23:13-25.*--DECEMBER 2.--

Golden Text:--"Then said Pilate, I find no fault in this man."--Luke 23:14.

OUR Lord's words, "The darkness hateth the light," were verified not only in his own case but also amongst those who have been his footstep followers throughout this Gospel age. In the lesson before us we see an illustration of this in the

incidents connected with our Lord's examination before Pilate and Herod, in his being "set at naught" and variously maltreated, and we can apply the same general principles to his true followers. Another of our Lord's sayings was illustrated in his experiences at this

time, namely, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness." The Jewish people had a certain amount of light, as the Apostle declares, "Much advantage every way." (*Rom. 3:2.*) Yet the most rabid of our Lord's foes were the chief priests and rulers, and the Jewish mob whom they incited and authorized, and in a sense legalized by their learning, pretended piety and official position as those who "sat in Moses' seat." How great was their darkness, how perverted their sense of justice, how absent all sense of love!--how fully they demonstrated the wisdom of the divine decision that they were not fit to represent God and his Kingdom amongst men, and should, therefore, be cast off, that a spiritual Israel might be selected as Messiah's associates, his Bride. And is it not the same to-day? Has it not been a similar class all the way down through the age and now that is found opposing God and his Anointed, represented in his members in the flesh? It is even so: while the whole world under the blinding influence of the Adversary is opposed to the light, to the Truth, to the children of the light and to the promulgation of the Truth, nevertheless it is nominal Christendom and her Doctors of Divinity whose opposition is chiefly aroused, whose tongues are the loudest in crying, "Crucify! crucify!" against all the true members of the body of Christ, those who walk in his footsteps. We are glad of the Apostle Peter's assurance, as respects all such, that in general they have not had a sufficiency of light to make their course of conduct a guilty one to the last degree. The apostles said of the traducers of Jesus, his real crucifiers, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (*Acts 3:17.*) We may be sure that much of the opposition to the body of Christ all down through the age the Lord will be able to similarly pass by as done in blindness, in ignorance. We must be in the condition of heart to love our enemies, to do good to those who despitefully use us, and to pray for such; and we have good hope that when the blessed Kingdom of the Lord shall be established, and clear knowledge of the Lord fill the whole earth, many of these now blinded and bitter enemies will have the eyes of their understanding opened and be amongst those who will bow the knee and with the tongue confess to the glory of God.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Our Lord was brought before Pilate early in the morning of the day of his crucifixion, about eight o'clock. The Jewish Sanhedrin had met still earlier, and had approved of the findings of the High Priest in the examination during the night watches--that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy, of treason against God and his country. This was held to be proven by his admission before the High Priest that he was the Son of God, the Messiah. They were ashamed of him, and

desired no such King, no such Savior, no such Messiah. They went to Pilate's judgment hall early, before the news of our Lord's arrest would reach the people of the city in general, and thus too great a commotion be made and perhaps some of his friends be aroused to his defense.

It required but a few moments for Pilate to make an examination of the prisoner at the bar. The charge against our Lord before Pilate was a totally different one from that on which he had been condemned by the Jewish Sanhedrin. It was of three counts: (1) Sedition, raising a tumult, stirring up the people to a rebellion; (2) that he taught the people that they should not give tribute to Caesar; (3) that he himself claimed to be the king who should receive the tributes. The charges were so evidently untrue that Pilate speedily discerned the animus of the Jewish rulers who formulated them. He saw that it was the religious power of the rulers that was in danger, and not the civil power of the Roman government. The multitude standing outside the gates shouted the accusations riotously, incited so to do by their religious teachers. Jesus made no reply, so that even Pilate marveled at his quietness, self-possession, non-resistance and lack of vindictiveness and refusal to defend himself, even though he was manifestly a person quite able to plead his own cause. Pilate even asked him if he were not aware of the fact that he had power either to set him at liberty or to inflict the punishment desired by the people. Our Lord's answer was serene, that Pilate could have no power at all except as it was permitted him by the heavenly Father. Ah, this was the secret of our Lord's composure! He had given his life, his all; he had surrendered to the Father his every interest; he had confidence in the Father's love and wisdom, and was willing, therefore, to drink of the cup which the Father had poured, rejoicing to do the will of him that sent him and to finish that work. So with the Lord's followers throughout this age--in proportion as they, like him, have been enabled to realize the fulness of their consecration and at heart have been filled with his spirit and loving submission to the Father's will--in that same proportion they have been able to be calm under most severe and trying ordeals, so that the world even has marveled at their composure and self-control, the peace of God passing all understanding ruling in their hearts.

Concluding his brief interview with Jesus, Pilate approached the wide-open doorway of his court-room, outside which the people were crowding, and publicly and openly declared, "I find no fault in this man." The rulers, disappointed, fearing that by some mischance they would after all lose their prey, were angry, and aroused the populace to expressions of dissatisfaction with the verdict. Pilate, however, had given the sentence and was not disposed to change it-- yet he

hesitated about setting Jesus at liberty in the face of such an angry demonstration on the part of the general public as well as of the influential rulers. Incidentally hearing something said about Galilee, he inquired if Jesus were a Galilean, and this being confirmed he said, "Since he is a Galilean I will send him to Herod, who at present is in the city." Then our Lord, publicly accompanied by a squad of Roman soldiers, was sent to Herod, who had a curiosity to see him; he had heard many things about him, and he had wondered whether or not he might be John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded, raised from the dead. But when Herod began to question Jesus he answered him never a word. There is a time to speak and a time to hold silence, and our Lord was the master of the situation. Undoubtedly his silence was more forceful than anything he could have said. Herod was evidently provoked by this silence, but dare not belittle himself by showing this. He therefore contented himself by allowing some of his men of war to array Jesus in a gorgeous robe, and to do him mock reverence. He regarded Jesus as a pretender, and no doubt thought it a stroke of wit to parody his claims of royalty. His verdict was, Not guilty--innocent. As Pilate had turned the prisoner over to Herod, declaring that he himself found no cause of death in him, Herod returned the compliment by remitting the prisoner again to Pilate. When, therefore, Pilate found the matter again in his hands he called together the chief priests and the rulers of the people, as stated in the opening verse of our lesson, and said, "Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people: And behold I have examined him before you and have found no fault in this man as touching those things whereof ye accuse him. No, nor Herod, for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is found in him. I will therefore chastise him and release him."

AN APOLOGY FOR PILATE

Many are disposed to censure Pilate's severity: they call him a wicked man, unwilling to stand by his own convictions, and suggest that even the proposition to chastise Jesus was a manifestation of this weakness--that if there was no fault in Jesus, justice would not only have forbidden his execution but would also have forbidden his scourging with whips.

We believe that an injustice is done the man. He was a heathen, had no faith in the Jewish expectancy of a Messiah, no respect for the Jews themselves, but thought of them as a rebellious people whom he was placed there to keep in order--in subjection to the Roman empire. His training in life had been to consider that there might be many gods invisible, but that Caesar, the Roman Emperor, was the tangible representative of the gods, whose honor, authority and respect should be maintained at any hazard. He knew

that he was placed as the representative of Rome at Jerusalem not to do justice but to keep order--not to favor and forward the divine plans, but to represent and maintain the authority of the Roman empire. What mattered it to Rome if a thousand innocent victims suffered every year so long as Roman prestige was maintained and Roman tribute was collected? If injustice amongst the Jews had been likely to stir them up to disloyalty to Rome, then the injustice would have been righted, so that the authority of Rome might remain upon a good basis; but if both the rulers and the people united against anybody or anything, and made it a test of their loyalty to Rome, the Emperor and senate would surely expect that Pilate, as their representative, would favor the voice of the people and maintain order and quiet. Apparently therefore it was either a respect which Pilate felt for our Lord's personality or the influence of his wife's dream of the preceding night that led him to strive with the Jewish rulers for the release of Jesus. Many another man in his position would have used the opportunity to curry favor with those under his control, and would have executed Jesus simply to please them--just as we see that Herod did on another occasion, respecting which we read, "And he killed James, the brother of John, with a sword. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also."--*Acts 12:2,3*.

The scourging incident should be viewed from this standpoint: Pilate wished to placate the mob spirit which he perceived at his court gate: if Jesus were scourged, and thus demeaned, the people would probably be better satisfied and more likely to let the incident drop than if the Lord were turned free without chastisement. We esteem then that it was with a good motive rather than a bad one that Pilate condemned Jesus to be lashed on the back.

BARABBAS CHOSEN--BY POPULAR VOTE

At this season of the year it was the custom for the Roman Governor to release a prisoner as an act of magnanimity and an adjunct to the general joy of the occasion. Pilate reminded them of this, and suggested that after scourging Jesus he would be the prisoner whom he would release, but the multitude cried out against this with united voice, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." We cannot doubt that the priests and rulers had more or less to do with this--that they were still inciting the people against Jesus. And when we think of the Jews we are appalled at the condition of heart which it reveals. Barabbas was a seditionist in fact and had been imprisoned for murder --and this was the choice of the people as against Jesus! Truly they showed the murderous condition of their hearts: although outwardly a moral people, respecting the Law, inwardly they were filled with the

spirit of the Adversary-- they hated the Light and the great Light-Bearer. Similarly, all down through the age, those who have been chosen to office--while they have not always been seditionists and murderers--have rarely, if ever, been saints. And so today, although nearly nineteen centuries have passed, and the most civilized parts of the world are called Christendom, we may be sure that if our Lord were to offer himself as King to these he would be rejected, and, if not a murderer elected instead, the choice would certainly fall upon one who had considerable of the murderous spirit--the spirit of the world, the spirit of the Adversary, which frequently manifests itself, as the Apostle declares, in malice, hatred, envy, strife--works of the flesh and of the devil. The disciple is not above his Lord; but in proportion as he has a heart-likeness to his Lord, in that same proportion he will be tolerably sure not to be pushed into any place of very great honor and dignity in the present time. We by no means inveigh against those who occupy official and honorable positions. We believe that good, noble characters have filled such positions by popular choice, popular vote, but we consider such occurrences so rare as to prove the rule to the contrary. Let it be remembered, however, that we make a wide distinction between a good citizen, a good ruler, a noble man and a saint, a follower in the footsteps of Jesus. Let us determine that by the grace of God our stand will be with the Master; let us expect that it will be unpopular, cost us shame and contempt and disadvantage, and that this will be our share in his cross--and let us remember that only those who bear the cross will wear the crown.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
 In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;
 Some great cause, God's new Messiah offering each the bloom or blight,
 Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right;
 And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light."

PILATE'S WIFE'S DREAM

Edersheim remarks that it was "While the people were deciding to choose Barabbas instead of Jesus, and Pilate was sitting on his judgment seat, a messenger came to him from his wife, warning him not to yield and deliver up Jesus to be crucified, for she had suffered many things in a dream because of him. We can understand it all, if, on the previous evening, after the Roman guard had been granted, Pilate had spoken of it to his wife. Tradition has given her the name Procula. What if Procula had not only been a proselyte, like the wife of a previous Roman

governor (Saturninus), but had known about Jesus and spoken of him to Pilate on that evening? This would best explain his reluctance to condemn Jesus, as well as her dream of him."

"WHY, WHAT EVIL HATH HE DONE?"

Pilate a second time essayed to influence the people, but again they began shouting, "Crucify him, Crucify him," and the third time he appealed to them saying, "Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him. I will therefore chastise him and let him go," but the mob was "instant with loud voices requiring that he might be crucified, and the voices of them and the chief priests prevailed."

Stalker comments upon this incident: "This scene has often been alleged as the self-condemnation of democracy. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, its flatterers have said--but look yonder! When the multitude has to choose between Jesus and Barabbas, it chooses Barabbas! If this be so, the scene is equally decisive against aristocracy. Did the priests, scribes, and nobles behave better than the mob? It was by their advice that the mob chose."

Elsewhere their arguments are set forth: they clearly intimated to Pilate that the incident would be reported at Rome, and would have a peculiar light that would reflect against his vigilance as the representative of Roman authority --that a pretender to the dominion of Israel had appeared, and that they themselves, loyal to Rome, had arrested him and brought him to the Governor, who was so slack of his duty that instead of crucifying him he had set him free. Poor Pilate was in a very hard place for one of his character, position and education. He gave way finally under pressure, whereas many a man in his place would not have thought of resisting the popular will in such a matter. He finally gave sentence that the will of the people should be done. And is not this as high a level as is ever attained by earthly law and justice? What human law can stand against the will of the people? Is it not the same with us today? The people make the laws and the people execute them, and Pilate merely hearkened to the voice of Jesus' own countrymen. Here, too, the Scriptures lay the blame, saying, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Here the Apostle also lays the blame, not upon Pilate, but upon the Jews and their rulers.

PILATE WASHED HIS HANDS

As an indication of his dissent, and as clearing himself in the sight of all from the responsibility, Pilate called for water to be brought, and in the sight of the multitude poured it over his hands. Thus washing his hands he said, both in symbol and in words, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man, see ye to it." (*Deut. 21:6-9*.) How blinded were

the Jews that they could not even appreciate justice to the same extent as this heathen ruler, who had nothing at stake personally nor religiously--whose every interest might be said to have been better served by a concurrence in the popular vote. This hardness of heart is represented by the willingness with which the priests and rulers and multitude accepted the responsibility, saying, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." The full responsibility of what followed was left with the Jews.

"HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED"

Carrying out the thought that the responsibility lay with the Jews, God through the Prophet had already declared that the time would come when the poor blinded eyes would be opened and the Jews would look upon him whom they had pierced and mourn for him. (*Zech. 12:10.*) Thank God that such a time is coming, and that the Lord promises that he will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and will take away their sin. As a people they have had severe experiences for now many centuries, and all who have the Spirit of Christ rejoice to know of their coming reprieve; and not only so, but to know, further,

that the blessing which will thus begin with the "Jew first" shall extend through him under the divine guidance of spiritual Israel in glory, the Christ, to the blessing of all the families of the earth during Christ's Millennial reign.

"AS DECEIVERS AND YET TRUE"

These words of the Apostle merely confirm the thought emphasized by the Master himself, that all true followers of Jesus will have more or less of his experiences. He was the true one--the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life--and yet he was crucified as a deceiver, he was misunderstood by the sin-blinded world, yea, by the most enlightened people of that time. The disciple is not to expect to be above his Lord, but rather to expect to glory in the privilege of being his companion. Let us learn, therefore, to rejoice even in the midst of misrepresentation, falsification, buffetings, scourgings, legal and illegal, farcical--let us count it all joy to be permitted thus to have companionship with our beloved Savior; let us learn the lesson of patient endurance in well doing, that in due time, not having fainted, we may reap the glorious reward of joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.

=====

Z '99, 119 – 121; R2469

THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST ARRAIGNED.

--MAY 21.--*JOHN 18:15-27.*--

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."--*John 1:11.*

ALTHO it is declared that all the disciples fled, John points out that Peter and himself followed at a distance. Their deep interest in the Master would not permit them to go to their homes; they must keep him in sight, and note how things would go with him to the very last. They were powerless to assist him against such great odds, and in the face of his own refusal to be assisted, but they were not powerless to love still. John, it seems, was somewhat acquainted at the high priest's palace, and readily gained entrance, not only for himself but for Peter.

But these favors and privileges became tests to Peter, and led to his denial of the Lord. And so it is with some of the Lord's followers of to-day. When they are by themselves, or with others of like precious faith, they are bold and courageous to confess the Lord and to serve him, but if perchance they get into palaces or amongst the servants and officers and high priests of nominal Christianity they are ashamed of the Master and fear to confess him, lest they should be cast out of the privileges enjoyed in the society of those who have not yet recognized the truth. Far better

would it have been for poor Peter had he openly declared, "Yes, I am one of his disciples, and since I presume that none such are wanted here I will go out." How much so honorable and proper a course would have reflected to his credit in the eyes of all just persons, and how much blessing it would have brought to him!

Peter's failure to take the proper course brought him later to a still more trying situation, when a kinsman of the man whose ear he had cut off asked him point-blank the question, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" Matters were getting pretty close for poor Peter. It was more now than a question of leaving the fire and the privileges and honor of the high priest's court: it was now a question of his identity as the one who had defended Jesus with a sword, and hence a question of his own arrest and trial at the same tribunal with the Master. One false step leads naturally to another; to have now declared for Jesus would have been a public testimony that he was a liar, in addition to leading to his apprehension, and so Peter concluded that in self-defence he must not only repeat the lie, and again deny the Master, but to make the matter more

strong before his accusers he began to curse and to swear that he knew not Jesus.

Poor Peter! Truly, as our Lord told him, Satan had desired to have him, to sift him, and surely he was being severely sifted at this time. It seems almost a miracle that he recovered his balance and repented and found forgiveness for his sins. It would seem that our Lord's prayer on his behalf operated through his previous announcement to Peter of this denial, for after he had thus denied, and after he had noticed the cock crow, Peter remembered the Lord's words, "The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." With feelings better imagined than they can be described, Peter hastily left the High Priest's apartments now of his own accord, going out into the shadows of early morning, that he might weep bitterly and entreat the Lord's forgiveness.

There is a lesson for us in the fact that Peter's failure was along the very line of his strength. He was naturally courageous, had boasted of it, and yet failed for lack of courage. "When I am weak then I am strong," implies that he who feels himself strong is really weak, as in Peter's case. Let us all learn to specially guard our supposedly strong points of character, remembering that we have a wily foe. We are to realize our weakness, our vulnerability at any point, except as we keep watch at every point and rely upon the great Captain of our salvation to assist us.

John does not tell the whole of the story; he omits reference to Peter's cursing and swearing. His love for Brother Peter evidently influenced him to omit that portion of the narrative not absolutely necessary to confirm the Lord's prediction. The account of the cursing and swearing is given by Mark, whose Gospel record is supposed to have been indited by Peter himself, Mark being in a large measure Peter's amanuensis. --**Mark 14:66-72.**

Jesus was examined of the High Priest: that functionary, however evil and murderously disposed at heart, felt bound to at least preserve the forms of justice, altho from the records elsewhere we know that himself and his associates amongst the priests and Pharisees had already determined that Jesus must be put to death because his influence amongst the people was inimical to their own;--because his teachings cast theirs into the shade and exposed their hollowness, bigotry and hypocrisy. Our Lord answered his questions accordingly; refusing to make any specific explanations he merely referred to his teachings, appealing thus to his rights as a Jew. His answer was the perfectly proper and legal one; he had been arrested without just cause, and the judge was now seeking to *find* a cause. Our Lord merely pointed out that the cause for the arrest must be shown to have been something which preceded the arrest.

It is not necessary for us to suppose that the officer who struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, and reproved him for improper language toward the Chief Priest, was intentionally unjust in the matter. Rather we may suppose that, influenced by his desire to appear zealous in support of the High Priest's position and judgment, this accentuated his mental unbalance as a fallen man, and led him to imagine evil where there was none. This circumstance, however, gives us the opportunity for discerning just what our Lord meant by his expression in the sermon on the mount, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also." (**Matt. 5:39.**) Our Lord did not literally turn the other cheek to the man and ask him to smite that also, nor did he even receive the smiting in silence. He was not willing that his good conduct and proper language should be evil spoken of without at least a proper endeavor to correct the matter. Hence he asked his smiter to point out wherein he had spoken evil, and suggested to him that if he could not point out the evil he should acknowledge his wrong in having improperly smitten for an evil which could not be pointed out.

In the light of this illustration the Lord's people are to understand the command, to turn the other cheek, to mean simply that they are not to resist evil with evil; rather, they are to receive more evil than return it in kind. On the contrary, however, they are to resist evil with good; they are to expostulate with evil-doers, as the Master did, endeavoring with kindness and gentleness to have them see the right and the wrong of the questions in dispute.

It would appear that our Lord's trial by the Jews was held before Caiaphas, the acting High Priest, the son-in-law of Annas, the proper High Priest according to the Jewish law; and the fourteenth verse identifies Caiaphas as the one who had previously declared, "'It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' And this spake he not of himself, but being High Priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."--**John 11:50-53.**

Here is an illustration of how a great truth may be seen from two opposite standpoints. The prophecy of Caiaphas was strictly true,--in strict accord with all the declarations of the Lord's Word, and was sent through one of the channels which the Lord had been in the habit of using (the High Priest's office) yet the person occupying that office, being out of heart-harmony with the Lord, was out of harmony also with the various features of the divine plan, and became an instigator and cooperator in an evil work, which nevertheless was working out in harmony with the divine foreknowledge and program.

There is a lesson in this also for all of the Lord's people in respect to every feature of divine truth. It is not sufficient that we see certain facts; it is necessary also that we be in heart-harmony with the Lord, else we might, like Caiaphas, aid in fulfilling the Lord's plan but nevertheless taking a wrong position may be bringing ourselves, with others, under a curse, while still cooperating in the fulfilment of the divine plan. Let all who are of the light, and who have received the truth, seek more and more to walk in the light and in the Master's footsteps, carefully avoiding the evils which we see illustrated in the cases of Judas, Peter and Caiaphas.

The trial before the Jews was of three parts:--

(1) The examination before Annas the *legal* High Priest which was wholly unofficial. He sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the *official* High Priest of Roman appointment, and as such the President of the Sanhedrin, whose court room was probably in the same palace, across the corridor, where Peter stood warming himself.

(2) The preliminary trial before Caiaphas is supposed to have been held between two or three o'clock on Friday morning--the members of the Sanhedrin or Jewish Court having been summoned by messengers as soon as Jesus was apprehended. This hearing was preliminary in the sense that it examined Jesus and formulated and decided upon the charges on which it would convict at the formal meeting at dawn, about five o'clock. For the Jewish law forbade a trial by night.--**Luke 22:66-71.**

(3) The formal trial before the Sanhedrin at dawn was merely a ceremony--a farce. The determination to kill Jesus having been reached long before his arrest, the matter of his condemnation was rushed through for two reasons. (a) The great Jews feared the common people would defend Jesus against their trumped up charges, which were the only ones even they could formulate. (b) The Passover was at hand and they wanted him killed before it. Ah! how little did they realize that they were being permitted of God to exercise the evil desires of their hearts and thus to fulfil types and prophecies to the very day.

A lesson on this for God's people is, that it is not sufficient that we go through a form or ceremony of

justice; nor is it sufficient that we know in advance that we cannot circumvent the divine plan or hinder its fulfilment. Many will find in the day of reckoning and revealing, that they have served God's purposes without honor or profit--in a manner that brought upon them condemnation instead of approval. Even the great Adversary Satan will ultimately find (but not in any degree to his credit or blessing) that all his opposition to God, to Christ, and to "the brethren," has been overruled by divine wisdom and power for *good*, by him who "maketh the wrath of man to praise him."

It is all-important then, that we have more than forms of justice, of righteousness; we must have the *spirit* of righteousness, a *love* of righteousness,--a sincere desire to know and to do God's will, else like as the Jews condemned and killed the Just One we might with forms of justice condemn and injure his "brethren." And to have the desirable condition of *love* for God and for righteousness implies a full consecration of heart to the Lord. Thus every examination of the subject brings us back to the fact that *full* consecration to the Lord, *full* self-surrender to his will as revealed in his Word, is the only proper and only safe course for any to pursue if they would hope to hear the Master's words, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

It was during the interim between the 3 A.M. examination and the 5 A.M. formal conviction of our Lord by his influential enemies, that he was subjected for two hours to the mockery and insults described by three of the Evangelists. (**Matt. 26:67,68; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63-65.**) These insults were committed by the "servants" and well illustrate the fact that low minds delight in the misfortunes of those whom they realize to be their superiors. These servants manifested the *same spirit* as their masters--the chief priests and Pharisees--their methods were ruder because they were more ignorant and coarse. The spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, on the contrary, whether in the educated or in the ignorant, is a spirit of love, of gentleness, of sympathy, of kindness. By their fruits both spirits may be known. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."

=====

THE GOOD CONFESSION BEFORE PILATE.

--MAY 28.--*JOHN 18:28-40; 1 TIM. 6:13.--**"I find no fault in him."--John 19:4.*

PILATE, the Roman governor of Judea, had in his hands the power of life and death. The Jewish Sanhedrin was permitted to govern the country in a religious way, according to Jewish law and custom, but had no power to order public execution. Apparently they did have the power to stone to death for blasphemy (the charge on which they condemned Jesus) as in the case of Stephen (*Acts 7:58*); and hence we may suppose that they had such a power in respect to Jesus, but failed to exercise it lest the people should resent the injustice. Moreover, quite possibly they realized the wide influence already attained by his teachings, and desired to make his execution as public and as disgraceful as possible--to the intent that his followers might be chagrined and humiliated, as well as himself, because few would care to confess themselves disciples of one who had been publicly executed as a criminal,--condemned by both civil and ecclesiastical judges. Thus they hoped to nip in the bud the new system of religious teaching, which, if it continued, would evidently entirely subvert their own influence with the people. Thus unwittingly these evil-doers were carrying out the very arrangements foreordained of God--and doing so in the full exercise of their own evil volition.

As already noted, the formal condemnation of our Lord before the Jewish Sanhedrin occurred at dawn, five to six o'clock, and immediately they hurried him to Pilate's judgment hall, intent on getting him into the hands of the Roman soldiers for execution at the earliest possible moment, so that the multitudes might realize his case as beyond the power of their intervention. Nor had the Jewish rulers any particular reason to suspect that Pilate would hesitate at all to order an execution. Pilate seems to have had a reputation for cruelty. Philo speaks of "his corruption, his acts of insolence, his habit of insulting the people, his cruelty, his continual murders of people untried and uncondemned, and his never-ending and most grievous inhumanity at all times--a man of most ferocious passions, very merciless as well as very obstinate." Apparently the rulers of the Jews had frequent cause to appeal to Pilate to be merciful, and generally without effect; they seem to have taken for granted that if any prisoner were brought to him with a request for execution he would take pleasure in complying.

We are reminded of our Lord's words to the Pharisees, "Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity," when

we read that these very persons who murderously were scheming for the destruction of the Just One would not enter into Pilate's judgment hall, "lest they should be defiled," and thus be hindered from celebrating the Passover. How wretchedly inconsistent and hypocritical they were! They feared that Pilate's judgment hall, being under jurisdiction of the Gentiles, might have in it some *leaven* (a symbol of sin), and realized not that the real leaven of sin had permeated and thoroughly saturated their own hearts--anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife.

What a lesson the Lord's people have here: for we are to remember that these heart-corrupted conspirators were the professed holiness people of their day and church. While it is not in the power of any to-day to crucify the Lord and put him to an open shame, it is within our power to put to shame, to crucify, his "brethren" --the members of his body. And we fear that some to-day are doing this with as much self-deception as was exercised by these chief priests and Pharisees who secured our Lord's crucifixion. True, the Pharisees knew not what they did, as Peter says, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (*Acts 3:17.*) And so likewise to-day any who put to shame the members of "the body of Christ" probably are ignorant of what they do. Nevertheless they put themselves under the Lord's sentence, "It were better that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea." (*Luke 17:2.*) Let us each therefore beware, and keep the heart, out of which are the issues of life.

Had the hearts of those Pharisees been in proper condition, full of love of righteousness and truth, and appreciative of whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, they could not have made the mistake of rejecting and crucifying the Lamb of God. Similarly, those who have the spirit of love for the brethren will be hindered from becoming in any manner their persecutors. Only such can properly eat of the antitypical Passover.

The Roman governor, knowing of the peculiar custom of the Jews in respect to their Passover time, accommodated himself to their theory and had his chair of state brought outside the judgment hall to what was known as the Place of the Pavement, an elevated platform. Jesus was called up on this platform for examination, while the Jews standing outside of the unhallowed ground made known to Pilate their

accusations. They evidently expected that the mere presentation of Jesus as a prisoner for crucifixion would be sufficient. Apparently they had not even expected to be required to make an accusation; hence their answer, "If he were not a malefactor [evil-doer] we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Some have suggested, in harmony with the character of Pilate and his probable disrespect for the Pharisees, that his question rather was, "What accusation do *you* bring against *him*?" as tho he would give the implication that Jesus rather had ground for making accusation against the Pharisees--which of course was the case. The hardened Roman no doubt had become an expert reader of human character, and could readily see that there were no criminal features in our Lord's countenance, and many in those of his accusers.

To the surprise of the priests and Pharisees, Pilate turned Jesus over again to them, saying in substance, This is some petty religious quarrel with which I care to have nothing to do; take the prisoner and do with him according to your own laws and customs--imprisoning him, or causing him to be beaten, or whatever you may think proper, according to your law. But, thirsting for our Lord's death, his persecutors revealed their real condition of heart, saying, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."

Hard, cruel, unmerciful tho he was, Pilate realized the true situation--that the guilty were pursuing the innocent to death. That he might have the better opportunity for thinking quietly, and also for hearing what Jesus would say in self-defence, Pilate left the Jews and called Jesus unto him into the judgment hall, where they conversed. There must have been something very striking in our Lord's personal appearance to have caused Pilate to consider for a moment the rejection of the demands of the Jewish Court or Sanhedrin, for altho he had full power of life and death it was incumbent upon him, as his first duty, to preserve the peace and tranquility of his dominion; and this implied that in a general way at least he must keep on the popular side, especially when the popular side embraced the chief men of the province, and particularly when those chief men desired the execution of one whom they denounced as a disturber of the peace. Pilate's position was in many respects a delicate one: he must please the government at Rome, and he must avoid unnecessary disputes with the local authorities, who in the present instance were evidently so determined that they would have created a general disturbance rather than that their evil scheme should come to naught. The fact is that six years later these people did send to the Roman Emperor such complaints against Pilate as secured his removal.

Alone with Jesus, Pilate's question was, "Art thou King of the Jews?" The Jews had not made such a charge against Jesus; indeed, they were far from

wishing to acknowledge the Galilean as King of the Jews, or as being thus recognized by any number; they had thus far merely charged that Jesus was an evil-doer, an insurrectionist, whose death was necessary to the peace of the nation. It would seem therefore that Pilate had previously heard from some quarter about the riding of Jesus on the ass, and as being hailed by the people as the Son of David a few days previously. That this was not part of the accusation of the Jews seems evident from our Lord's reply to Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Are you an interested inquirer after the truth on this subject, or are you merely calling up a matter of which you have heard? Pilate's reply, "Am I a Jew?" was tantamount to saying, What do I know about your Jewish hopes and expectations? I am the Roman governor, and if you are a king it is your own nation and its chief representatives that have delivered you to me. What have you done, if you are their king, that makes your subjects thus disloyal to you? Apparently there is no great danger of your exercising any power against the Roman empire; you are meek, gentle, lowly, unresisting yourself, and your people are crying out against you. King of the Jews, explain this peculiar situation!

Then Jesus explained that his Kingdom is not of this order of things, otherwise he would have servants to fight and to defend him, and would not be as at present, at the mercy of his enemies; and that his kingdom had not yet commenced. Astonished, and perhaps with some degree of sympathy for a great ruler under such humiliating conditions, Pilate asks, Do you then claim that you are a king? Our Lord answers, "Thou sayest," that is, Your statement is correct; I am a King. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

This was the good confession which our Lord witnessed before Pontius Pilate, to which the Apostle refers. (*1 Tim. 6:13*.) He confessed his kingship and its divine authority. We are not to wonder that Pilate was incredulous of our Lord's claims to kingship, and that he probably thought him a fanatic. We are rather to remember that remarkably few of those who have heard of Jesus have recognized the truth of this statement that he is *a King*. How few, even amongst professed Christians, recognize the kingly office of our Lord! Many who realize that Jesus was indeed the Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief, and some who realize that he died for our sins, have never yet seen that he purchased not only man but the empire originally given to the first Adam. Many can realize our Lord in the attitude of Priest who fail to realize that he is also to be a King, and that throughout the Millennial age he will be a Priest upon his *throne*,

"after the order of Melchizedec," his Church and Bride being associated with him and sharing in both his priestly and his kingly offices.

The priestly office speaks mercy, forgiveness and grace to help; but the kingly office is no less essential to the world's salvation--men must be *delivered* from the bondage of sin and death--and must be *ruled* with the iron rod in order to develop them and fit them for life everlasting; and all of this work belongs to him who redeemed us with his own precious blood. It is well that we remember, too, that a very large proportion of our Lord's parables related to the Kingdom in its various stages--now embryotic, by and by to be set up with full power and authority to overthrow evil and to bring in everlasting righteousness.

This Kingdom is to be a Kingdom of truth, of righteousness and of love, working well for its subjects, and our Lord's mission at the first advent was to lay the foundation for that Kingdom by witnessing to the truth--the truth that God is both just and loving, and is willing to receive back into harmony with himself all who love truth and righteousness. It was our Lord's faithfulness to the truth that brought upon him the opposition of those who were blinded by the Adversary, hence his statement that he came to bear witness to the truth is a brief statement of his mission. It was his witness to the truth that cost him his life, and it was the giving of his life in defence of the truth that constituted the redemption price. Similarly all of the Lord's followers are to bear witness to the truth--the truth in respect to God's character and plan--the features of that plan accomplished at the first advent in the redemption of the world, and the features of that plan yet to be accomplished in the second advent, in the deliverance of the world from the bondage of sin and corruption. It is such witness to the truth that is to cost all the true followers of Jesus their lives in presenting themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Let each one who hopes to be a joint-heir with the Prince of Life in the Kingdom witness to the truth--a good confession respecting the Kingdom, its foundation and ultimate superstructure in glory.

A very short discourse on such a text was quite sufficient for Pilate. He had no desire to enter into a theological discussion, which could only reflect unfavorably upon his own past record. He broke off the conversation suddenly, saying, "What is truth?"--as tho he would say, Who is truthful? Where is absolute justice to be found, absolute truth, absolute probity? And without waiting for an answer he left Jesus in the judgment hall, went forth to the Place of the Pavement, and addressed the waiting Sanhedrin and their multitude of servants and hangers-on, brought with them to give evidence of popular clamor.

Pilate announced his decision, "I find in him no fault at all." Then the Jews, fearing that their prey was about to escape, began to bethink themselves of charges to be formulated. They did not mention the charge on which they themselves had convicted Jesus, falsely, namely, blasphemy; for this would have been no crime whatever in the eyes of the Roman governor. Instead, they made three charges, *viz.*, (1) sedition-- agitation of the people against the existing order of things; (2) that he interfered with the collection of taxes, teaching the people that it was improper to pay tribute-money to a foreign power; and (3) that he made claims of being a king.--**Luke 23:2.**

But now learning that Jesus' home and principal ministry was in Galilee, Pilate thought to relieve himself by referring the entire matter to Herod, who had charge of the province of Galilee, and who was then at Jerusalem, at a palace not far distant. This was the Herod who had caused the death of John the Baptist. Luke tells us (23:8) that Herod was very glad to see Jesus, for having heard much respecting him he hoped also to see some miracle performed by him. Herod questioned our Lord with many words, but received no response whatever, while the chief priests and scribes grew the more vehement in their accusations, seeing that Jesus denied nothing that they said, and that thus they were not called upon for proofs.

Herod no doubt was piqued as well as disappointed by our Lord's conduct, and unable to gain entertainment from him as expected, he and his guard took sport in mocking the Redeemer's claims of dignity and kingship.

But with a desire to return Pilate's compliment, and perhaps with some little touch of remorse of conscience in respect to the beheading of John the Baptist, Herod disposed of his responsibilities in the case by returning our Lord to Pilate. It was after our Lord's return to Pilate's judgment hall that the latter, apparently as a final effort to appease the Jews, to preserve the peace of the country, and yet to let go one whom he clearly discerned to be innocent, announced that in view of the clamor against Jesus he would cause him to be scourged, altho he found no fault in him. He evidently hoped that by the infliction of the scourging (whipping) and incidental humiliation, that the spirit of malice on the part of the accusers would be satisfied, and that they would peaceably agree to his release. Apparently the scourging was done in some interior apartment by the Roman soldiers; and probably with the full consent of Pilate a cast-off royal robe and a crown of thorns were put upon our Lord. Evidently this proceeding would furnish amusement to the unsympathetic soldiery, and so much shame and contempt cast upon our Lord might at least satisfy his persecutors, if it did not awaken sympathy.

Acting in harmony with this thought, Pilate came again before the Jews, and caused our Lord to be led forth, weak, exhausted and miserable-looking, from the trying experiences of the night, supplemented by the painful and weakening influence of the scourging just received. With his crown of thorns and soiled purple robe he must have been a pitiable sight indeed, and yet the noble outlines of his perfect manhood must still have been striking, and no doubt suggested the words of Pilate which have echoed down the centuries since, "Behold the man!" (*John 19:5*.) Pilate evidently was impressed with our Lord's personality; never before had he seen so splendid a specimen of the human race. He was such an one as any people might have been glad to honor as their king. He evidently hoped that some impression would be made upon the clamoring throng which accused Jesus. But he was mistaken; they clamored so much the more, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Meantime Pilate's wife had heard of the trial and had sent Pilate word respecting her dream, and advice that he have no part in doing injury to this just person.--*Matt. 27:19*.

Pilate immediately said to the Jews, Take him and crucify him, if that is your law. But altho thus assured that the Roman governor would not interfere in the matter, the Pharisees hesitated about accepting the proposition; they much preferred that the crucifixion should be in the hands of the Roman governor and his soldiers, lest the friends of Jesus and the multitudes who had been healed and taught by him should come to his assistance and overpower them; hence they answered Pilate that according to their law Jesus should die, because he made himself the Son of God. They perverted the truth in their endeavor to uphold their course, for the Law did not prescribe death as a penalty for the claim of being the *Son* of God. Had our Lord claimed to be the Father he would have come under the terms of the death penalty for blasphemy, but there was no such penalty, nor was it blasphemy, to call himself, as he did, the Son of God.

When Pilate heard of this he was the more alarmed. The features of Jesus were impressive of themselves, but if one possessing such features made the claim of relationship to God there certainly was some ground for fear. Pilate still withstood the Jewish clamor, and sought to release our Lord. Then the Jews, as a last resort, threatened Pilate by implication, crying out, "If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar." They thus intimated that if Pilate frustrated their designs, and refused to crucify Jesus as they demanded, they would report him to Caesar as an enemy of his empire, a succorer of seditious persons, a fosterer of rival kings in the empire. Pilate could not stand against this argument, and washed his hands in the presence of the multitude, saying by this act, as well as in words, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." And when the Jews cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," Pilate delivered him to be crucified.--*Matt. 27:24,25*.

We are not of those who condemn Pilate; he was a servant of the empire, charged with doing everything reasonable to preserve peace in his dominions, and only a clearly enlightened and fully consecrated saint could have been expected to do more than Pilate did for the release of Jesus. Our Lord in no sense intimated guilt on the part of Pilate. The responsibility was assumed by the Jews, and surely its penalty has rested heavily upon them and upon their children for the past eighteen centuries, and even yet their cup of anguish is not filled to the full. "Jacob's trouble" will be no unimportant one in the great time of trouble that is just approaching; but we thank God on their behalf that deliverance is nigh for them, as well as for all others of the groaning creation. How blessed the thought that when they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and wail because of him, it will not be with tears of hopeless sorrow; for the Lord "shall pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his first-born."--*Zech. 12:10*.

Z '99, 145 – 148; R2473

HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS.

--JUNE 4.--*JOHN 19:17-30*--

"The Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."--Gal. 2:20.

CRUCIFIXION was the horrible method of execution in olden times for the vilest of criminals — its severity being intended to intimidate and deter evil-doers, rather than as a gratification of cruel sentiments. Farrar says of it:—

"Death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death *can* have of the horrible and ghastly--dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended

wounds--all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. Such was the death to which Christ was doomed."

As already noted, the envious and murderous chief priests and doctors of Judaism desired just such a public denunciation of the great Teacher who so fearlessly had exposed their hypocrisies and inconsistencies, and who was fast making an impression upon the common people. For them to have stoned him to death as a blasphemer they probably feared would leave him a martyr in the eyes of many, while to have him publicly executed as a criminal, sentenced by the Sanhedrin and executed by the highest civil power in the world, would, they hoped, brand Jesus, his teachings and his followers, forever with infamy. We may imagine, therefore, how their evil hearts exulted, when finally they had coerced Pilate into signing the warrant for the execution of Jesus.

According to *Mark's account (15:25)* the death-warrant was signed by Pilate about nine o'clock in the morning--the trial of Jesus, and Pilate's various attempts to secure his release from his enemies, having occupied three hours. At once they started, the two robbers bearing their crosses, and Jesus bearing his cross, taking the place of Barrabas, who was to have been executed, but who was released. It was the custom in olden times to compel the convicts to bear the instruments of their own torture. Nor were the crosses so large and heavy as they are generally illustrated in modern paintings. On the contrary, the evidence is that the feet of the crucified were usually only twelve to eighteen inches from the ground. Altho small, these crosses constituted a good burden for a reasonably strong man; but our Lord, after passing through his Gethsemane experiences and the night of buffeting and scourging, and his further scourging by Pilate's orders, was sick, exhausted, weak, sore. Apparently even the hardened soldiers took pity upon him, and meeting Simon the Cyrenian on the way, they compelled him to relieve Jesus.

We know nothing respecting Simon, except that Mark relates that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, which gives the suggestion that these, his two sons, may subsequently have become the followers of Jesus and well known amongst the disciples. In any event Simon himself enjoyed a great privilege which thousands since have almost envied. How the apostles, Peter, James and John and others, must have regretted the fearfulness of heart which kept them all at a distance, and hindered them from proffering their aid to the Master in his trying hour! John, we know, was not far off; probably the others were near also; but what an opportunity they missed!

And very similar opportunities are still with us all--opportunities to serve the Christ--opportunities for serving the members of the body of Christ. As everyone who follows the Master's footsteps must needs have some Gethsemane experiences, so also each must have a taste at least of all the Master's experiences. Let us not forget, then, to look about us for opportunities for serving the "brethren," the "little ones," the members of the body of Christ. Let each be careful not to add to the reproaches that must fall upon all the followers of the Lamb, but on the contrary to offer words of sympathy, and to help bear each other's crosses, difficulties and trials by the way. Thus can we best show to our Lord and Head how we would have appreciated the opportunity of helping him bear his cross on the way to Calvary.

The place of crucifixion was called Golgotha, the Hebrew word signifying a skull, the Latin name for a skull being Calvary. This name was given to the locality probably because the general contour of the hill, which was just outside of Jerusalem, closely resembles a skull when viewed at a distance. It was on the way to this place, Golgotha, Calvary, that some of the charitable women of Jerusalem, according to their general custom, offered the condemned ones sour wine mixed with bitter myrrh--a draught which had a tendency to stupefy the nerves, thus rendering the execution the less agonizing. The two robbers quite probably drank of the potion, but *Mark (15:23)* declares that our Lord refused it--having learned that his experiences were the Father's will, he would do nothing whatever to hinder himself from receiving them to the full.

Probably Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, the mother of James and John, and Salome, the wife of Cleophas (*Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40*) and others of the friends of Jesus, by this time gained courage and mingled with the women who offered the wine and myrrh, so that Luke says, "There followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." -- *Luke 23:27,28*.

Thus, and with other words recorded, our Lord foreshadowed the great time of trouble coming upon the Jewish nation. By the expression, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" he implies that, altho the nation of Israel had been given up only five days previously, when he exclaimed, "Your house is left unto you desolate," if their rulers could sanction such injustice and lawlessness while their greenness, freshness and religious vitality remained, what might be expected in the future, after the religious vitality had dried out and

the nation as a whole had become ready for the great "burning" of their day of trouble, which was designed to, and had been prophesied should, utterly consume their polity. And how literally our Lord's prophecy was fulfilled: Josephus, without a thought of corroborating this testimony, tells us with explicitness of detail of the terrible sufferings which came upon the women and children during the great time of trouble which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70.

When we reflect upon the prophecy, "He was numbered with the transgressors" (*Isa. 53:12*), and then consider the terrible persistency with which the leading Jews pursued the dear Redeemer to secure his execution, it furnishes us fresh evidence of divine foreknowledge which, without interfering with the free moral agency of any man, is nevertheless working all things according to the counsel of God's will. We see afresh how God causes the wrath of man to praise him, and to testify to his wisdom and foreknowledge.

It was customary to have four soldiers attend each prisoner to execution; foremost went one who bore a white board on which was written the crime for which the prisoner was to be executed, and which was fastened above his head on the cross; then followed three soldiers with the hammer and nails, etc., and these all were under the command of a captain or centurion. The board placed above Jesus, on the cross, declared him to be the King of the Jews, and was written in three languages--in Hebrew, the language of the country, in Greek, because it was the language of the visitors and of the educated from all quarters, and in Latin, because it was the language of the empire and of the soldiers. There is a slight difference in the statements of the different Evangelists respecting the words used on this tablet, which may be accounted for by supposing that the words differed slightly in the different languages, and that the Evangelists quoted from the different originals.

Little did Pilate comprehend the great truth which he set before the world in the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Few yet realize the truth of this statement that Jesus is a King; comparatively few have yet rendered him allegiance, bowing the knee of their hearts in sincerity and truth: and yet so surely as the Lord has spoken it, the time is coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess him Lord, Master, King, to the glory of God the Father. And to this end it shall come to pass that after full knowledge of the matter has been given to all, he that will not obey this Prophet shall be cut off from among the people in the Second Death. (*Acts 3:23*.) He was indeed rejected of the Jews, but nevertheless the full elect number for the twelve tribes of Israelites indeed shall yet be found, who, as the Seed of Abraham, shall accept Messiah as King and, faithfully serving him in

the present life, and laying down their lives in his service and for the brethren, shall be accepted of him as joint-heirs in his Kingdom. Since there were not enough of the natural Israelites to complete these twelve tribes of Israelites indeed, God is completing the number by adoptions from amongst the Gentiles during the past eighteen centuries. Ultimately the entire number shall be completed.--*Rev. 7:4-8*.

The Jewish Doctors of Divinity were willing enough to have Jesus condemned as the King of the Jews, but were quite unwilling to have this sentence publicly recorded, and thus to imply that they had so feared his claim and influence as to seek his death. Pilate's refusal to amend the charge was a just one; if there was no merit in the claim, why should they have feared him, and why should he have been crucified? If there was enough merit in the claim to lead to his crucifixion, the matter should be plainly stated.

The division of the spoil was customary at every crucifixion, and gave evidence of the indifference and hard-heartedness of the soldiers in the presence of suffering. The raiment divided consisted of headdress, outer robe, girdle and sandals; the garment here called a "coat" and "vesture" was an undergarment which reached from the neck to the feet. It was evidently of fine quality and texture, as indicated by the fact that it was woven throughout, seamless. The casting of lots for this robe marked the fulfilment of a prophecy to which John calls attention. (*Psa. 22:18*.) The seamless robe appears to symbolize the righteousness of Christ, which can be appropriated only as a whole; it is of one piece, and may not be marred. Whoever may get it, gets a most valuable robe, and whoever may fail to get it, fails to obtain the righteousness which is of God in Christ. But not by lot or accident or chance does this robe come to the Lord's people. As the scriptures clearly point out, it is obtained only through the exercise of faith, and held only by the obedience of faith. We might perhaps consider it a symbol of the wedding-garment which falls to the lot of one class only, a little flock, who through faith and perseverance shall inherit the Kingdom as members of the body of Christ, covered by his seamless and spotless robe of righteousness.

The Apostle John had grown bolder as the day advanced, and while our Lord was crucified he drew near and was within speaking distance--quite possibly encouraged by seeing "the wife of Cleophas," who is supposed to have been a relative. It was a sorrowful gathering for these whose hearts went out with sympathy for the Master whom they loved but were powerless to comfort or relieve. They were weeping and sorrowing while others jeered and taunted, saying, "If thou be Messiah, come down from the cross"--thinking doubtless that our Lord's crucifixion by his enemies was the best possible proof that his claim to

Messiahship was a fraudulent one,--proving that he was an impostor.

With the members of the body of Christ it has been true at times also that the Father has permitted experiences to come to them in such manner as might imply that they did not have his favor, and were really impostors. But as the true disciples had a heart-union with the Lord, which outward circumstances and misfortunes could not break, a love which adversity could not chill, so with all his "brethren," those who are in heart-harmony, in oneness of spirit, will be found faithful under the most trying circumstances and adversities, because they have one spirit, a spirit of love for the brethren, by which they are enabled to identify one another as members of the one body.

How it gives us an insight into our Lord's sympathetic nature, to find him thinking in the interest of others at the very time when he himself is overwhelmed in trouble! His own agony did not hinder him from thinking of his mother, and making provision for her comfort, commending her to the care of the loving disciple John. We thus see exemplified in the Master the teaching of the Scriptures that each should seek to make provision for his own dependent ones and, as the Apostle says, "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (*1 Tim. 5:8.*) "*The faith*" includes thoughts of love, sympathy, interest and care for others, especially for them of the household of faith. We note the choice of John: it was doubtless because, first of all, of his loving tender disposition; secondly, his zeal for the Lord and the truth, and thirdly, his courage in pressing near to be with his dying Master in his closing hours, at the risk of his own life. Let us note these characteristics, as being those which the Lord approves, that noting them we may cultivate them in ourselves, and be granted special opportunities for service by this same Master.

It was about the close of our Lord's agony that he said, "I thirst," and this gave opportunity for the fulfilment of the prophecy which declared, "They gave me vinegar to drink." (*Psa. 69:21.*) This was not the ordinary vinegar, but more properly sour wine, the common, cheap drink of the soldiers. The sponge filled with the sour wine, and reached up to our Lord's mouth on a hyssop branch, served to moisten his lips and tongue, and was evidently intended as an act of kindness, mercy.

The different accounts give altogether what are known as "The seven words on the cross."

The first word from the cross: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." (*Luke 23:34.*) While these words undoubtedly represent truly our Lord's sentiments as respected his enemies, nevertheless it is

proper here to remark that the oldest Greek MSS. do not contain these words.

The second word from the cross: Our Lord's message to the robber, "Verily I say to thee to-day,--Thou shalt be with me in Paradise."--*Luke 23:43.*

The third word from the cross: "Woman, behold thy son!...Behold thy mother!"

The fourth word from the cross: "My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Mark 15:34.*) Of this expression a noted theologian has said, "In the entire Bible there is no other sentence so difficult to explain." Yet the meaning of this, and the reason for it, are very easily seen when once we have the correct view of the ransom. From this standpoint we see that the Logos became a man, "was made flesh," in order that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man. (*Heb. 2:9.*) We see also that the death penalty upon father Adam was the one which Jesus must experience in order to the satisfaction of Justice and the release of Adam and those who came under condemnation in and through Adam. As the penalty against Adam was death in the fullest and most complete sense, so Christ died for our sins, suffering the Just for the unjust, that he might release us from the death penalty and make possible a resurrection of the dead. As the penalty against Adam included his isolation from the Father as a condemned rebel, so it was necessary that our Lord Jesus, in taking Adam's place, should experience (if only for a short time) the full meaning of a sinner's *separation from God.*

Very mercifully, the Father did not permit this feature of Adam's penalty to rest upon our Redeemer throughout the entire period of his sacrificial ministry, but only at its very close. It was the fact of his communion with the Father that permitted Jesus to pass through all the trying experiences of that day and the preceding night with such great courage, but now, when the Father's sustaining grace and fellowship and communion of spirit with him were withdrawn, and our Redeemer, with all his fine sensibilities, was utterly bereft of solace from his dearest friend, it led his breaking heart to cry out these words of anguish. Evidently it had been hidden from him up to this time that he must suffer this phase of the punishment of Adam's transgression.

The fifth word from the cross: "I thirst," we have already considered.

The sixth word from the cross: "It is finished," suggests to us that our Lord's earthly mission had been accomplished. He came to die, to redeem the death-condemned race of Adam, to purchase it with his own precious blood, his life. He had consecrated himself to this work in harmony with the Father's plan, and with his dying breath, expiring, he could say that he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do. How it rejoices us to know that our dear Redeemer

did complete the work, that he did not resent the taunts of those who said, "If thou be Messiah, come down from the cross;" "Save thyself!" 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*.

But altho the sin-offering was finished eighteen hundred years ago by the sacrifice of our Lord, the Lamb of God, there is another part that is not yet finished; but in harmony with the divine plan our Lord is waiting for the Church, which is his body, to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (*Col. 1:24*.) And looking all about us, in the light of the Lord's Word, we may say that this work is almost finished too. Very soon the last member of the body of Christ will have suffered with the Head for righteousness' sake: then the entire work of sacrifice apportioned for this Gospel age, or Day of Atonement, will be ended, and the Millennial age of glory and blessing, ruling and uplifting, will begin; ushering in for the world of mankind the great blessing, the *purchase-price of which was finished at Calvary*. Let each dear follower in the Master's footsteps keep patiently and perseveringly on in the way of self-denial until his course shall be finished--until the Master shall say, It is enough; "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou has been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." --*Matt. 25:21*.

The seventh word from the cross: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (*Luke 23:46*.) These our Lord's last words were a quotation from the Scriptures. (*Psa. 31:5*.) In other words, it had already been declared of him that thus he would commend himself to the Father's grace and truth. Our Lord was finishing

laying down his human life a ransom for many sinners, but the Father had promised him a new life on a higher plane, as a reward for his faith, obedience and sacrifice. This new life, or life as a "new creature" was reckoned as begun at the time of our Lord's baptism when he received the holy Spirit; this new life was reckoned as continuing and growing during the years of his ministry while he was daily dying according to the flesh; the outward man was perishing, but the inward new creature was being renewed day by day. Now the outward man was about to cease entirely -- fully surrendered, the sacrifice finished.

Our Lord's interest in and hope for a future life looked forward, in harmony with the Father's promise, to the new or resurrection life; the new mind or spirit reckoned as begun at the moment of his baptism and consecration, having the divine promise of being perfected in a resurrection, in a spirit-body suitable for and in harmony with the new mind, the new will. But this change could not take place instantly: the divine law had arranged that not until the third day could he be quickened as the new creature of spiritual body. He must take this by faith; no one had ever passed this way before: yet with full confidence our dear Redeemer looked up to the Father, and full of faith declared that he committed all of life and all of these blessed hopes for the future to the Father's love and to the Father's power,--to be provided in harmony with the Father's plan and Word. And so must we, as followers in our Master's footsteps, look forward with faith, and in our dying hour commit all our interests to the keeping of him who has manifested his love for us, not only in the gift of his Son as our Redeemer, but all our journey through,--in his providential care, as well as in the exceeding great and precious promises which go before us and surround us and give us strength, comfort and assurance.

=====

Z '98, 170 – 173; R2315

A LOOK AT THE CRUCIFIED ONE.

--JUNE 12.--*MATT. 27:35-50*--

"Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."--1 Cor. 15:3.

ALTHO the Scripture narrative of our Lord's crucifixion is told in a most simple and artless manner, and without apparent attempt at embellishment to give it tragic effect, nevertheless in its simplicity it is one of the most touching narratives of history. As no novel could present a more eventful life, so likewise none ends more tragically than did this great real drama set upon the stage by the Almighty, as an exhibition both to

angels and to men of his Justice and Love combined. How strikingly depravity of fallen human nature was illustrated in those who witnessed our Lord's many wonderful works, and then his unresisting sacrifice for our sins, coldly--without appreciation. Nothing could illustrate this better than the account of the division of our Lord's garments and the lot cast to see who would get the seamless robe, which so beautifully represented his own personal perfection, and which had probably

been a gift from one of the noble women mentioned as being amongst his friends. (*Luke 8:3*.) The climax was reached when, after finally dividing the spoils, his executioners unpitifully viewed his sufferings and death--"Sitting down they watched him there."

Moreover we are compelled to concede that while the influence of the Gospel of Christ has had a large influence upon the world of mankind, producing a civilization which certainly is to be appreciated as a great advance over more rude and barbarous conditions of the past, nevertheless, we can readily discern that under the veneer of worldly politeness and civilization there is yet a great deal of the depraved disposition in the natural heart. For are there not many to-day who, after coming to a knowledge of the facts of his case-- a greater and clearer knowledge, too, than that enjoyed by the Roman soldiers--after learning of the wonderful works and of the sufferings of Christ, and that these were on our behalf, instead of falling at his feet and exclaiming, "My Lord and my Redeemer," on the contrary do just as the Roman soldiers did--"sitting down, they watch him there?" Their hearts are not moved with pity, or at least not to a sufficiency of sympathy to control their wills and conduct, and they continue to be "the enemies of the cross of Christ;"--for as he declared, "Whoever is not for me is against me."

It was probably with irony that Pilate wrote out the inscription that was placed above our Lord's head on the cross, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." He knew that the rulers of the Jews had delivered Jesus to death because they were envious of his influence as a teacher; and since the charge that they brought against him was "He maketh himself a king," claiming, "We have no king but Caesar," and since by this hypocritical course they had forced Pilate to crucify him, on the claim that it was necessary to the protection of the throne of Caesar, therefore Pilate now retaliated and used their weapon against themselves. But little did he think, of course, that this was the true title of the wonderful man Christ Jesus, whom they caused to be put to death. Another evangelist tells us that the leading Jews objected strongly, but that Pilate refused to alter the inscription.

It was a part of the ignominy which our dear Redeemer bore and a part of the "cup" which he desired that, if possible, he might be spared drinking, that he was crucified between two thieves, and as an evildoer. The Apostle says that we should consider this from the standpoint of enduring contradiction or opposition of sinners against himself, and suggests that it will make us stronger (not in fighting with carnal words or weapons, but) in *enduring* similar though lighter opposition and afflictions and misrepresentations.

"He suffered much for me, more than I now can know,

Of bitterest agony he drained the cup of woe.
He bore, he bore it all for me. What have I borne for thee?"

It is proper in this connection to remember that it was not the pain which our Lord endured, not the agony, which constituted our ransom-price;--it was his death. Had he died in a less violent and ignominious manner our ransom-price would have been equally well paid; but the trials, sufferings and contradictions which our Lord endured, while no part of our ransom-price, were expedient, in the Father's judgment, as being a part of his testing. The patient endurance of these proved his loyalty to the Father and to righteousness to the fullest degree: and thus proved his worthiness of the high exaltation which the Father had prepared as his reward. It was in view, not only of his humiliation to man-nature and his death for our sins, but in view also of the cup of shame and ignominy which he drained, that it is written, "*Wherefore* God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth."-- *Phil. 2:9,10*.

How strangely the average mind, in its fallen estate, unguided by the sound principles of judgment and the Lord's word, can be swayed from one extreme to the other. This is illustrated by the fact that many of those who wagged their heads and reviled the Lord upon the cross, and taunted him with his declaration that he was the Son of God, and with his statement respecting the temple of his body, had evidently been amongst those who heard him during the three and a half years of his ministry. Some of them probably had seen his "many wonderful works," and were among those of whom it is written, they " marvelled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," and who said, "When Messiah cometh can he do greater works than this man doeth?" Yet when they saw the tide turned against him, and especially when the influential of their religious teachers opposed him, they seem to have been easily swayed. We feel ashamed for the weakness of our fallen race as here shown. Yet the same thing is exemplified to-day: however pure and however luminous may be the presentations of the divine truth, if the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees of Christendom denounce it, they sway the multitude: however pure and true and honorable the lives of the Lord's servants, Satan can still suborn false witnesses, and secure honorable (?) servants to slander and reproach them. But this is what we are to expect. Did not our Master say, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord: if they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his

household?" Did he not assure us also, "When they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven"? Thus is fulfilled in us the declaration of the prophets also, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

The reproaches of the scribes and Pharisees were evidently the most cutting of all. When deriding Jesus' kingly office, and power, and faith in the heavenly Father, and his claimed relationship to him, they bantered him to manifest that power and to come down from the cross. O, how little they knew that it was necessary for the Son of Man to suffer these things to enter into his glory. How little they understood the divine plan, that Messiah could have no power to deliver Israel and the world from the hand of Satan and death, except he first of all should lay down his life as our *ransom* price. How thankful we may feel that our dear Redeemer was not controlled by passion and revenge, but by the Father's will and word, so that he endured the abuses of his tormenters in meekness and bowed his will to the will and plan of the Heavenly Father.

And similarly how the living members of the body of Christ are misunderstood; not only by the worldly, but especially by the prominent Pharisees of to-day. Verily, "as he is so are we in this world." As the world did not understand the Master's sufferings and trials, and could not see the necessity for his sacrifice, but rather considered these as marks of divine disfavor, as it is written, "We did esteem him smitten and afflicted of God," so with the Church;--the fact that God's consecrated people have his favor in spiritual and not in temporal blessings, is misunderstood by the world. They see not that the blessing of the spiritual nature and the spiritual favors which we seek are to be obtained by sacrifice of the earthly favor. But all who are of this sacrificing class, and running the race for the prize of the high calling may, with the Apostle, rejoice in the sufferings of the present time, and count its crosses but as loss and dross that they may win Christ and be found in him--members of the body of the glorified Christ.

It was not surprising that the two criminals on either hand of our Redeemer should join with the others in reviling Christ. The only little word of sympathy, however, that he received on this occasion, so far as the record goes, came later from one of these thieves. Our readers are referred to our issue of June 1, 1896, in respect to our Lord's promise to the penitent thief.

Our Lord's crucifixion took place at the sixth hour, nine o'clock in the morning--appropriately as represented in the type, for this was the hour of the morning daily sacrifice, and his death occurred six hours later, at three o'clock in the afternoon which, according to the Jewish reckoning, was the ninth hour.

This also was appropriately represented in the type, for the daily evening sacrifice was offered at this hour. It was fitting also that nature should veil her glories before such a scene, and that there should be darkness. We are not, however, to suppose that it was a dense darkness, but simply darkness, as stated. Nevertheless, it must have been supernaturally dark for, as it was the full of the moon, a solar eclipse even for a few moments was an impossibility.

It was now that our Lord uttered those agonizing words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" He had borne, with wonderful fortitude, the contradictions of sinners against himself, and Peter's denial, and the fact that all of his disciples fled from him, and that his last hours were spent amid the jeers of his enemies; but when the moment came that the Father's fellowship of spirit was withdrawn from him, that was more than he could bear, and it is claimed that he died of a literally broken heart, and that this was evidenced by the fact that both blood and water proceeded from the spear-wound inflicted shortly after his death.

It may be questioned by some whether or not this was a failure of our Lord's faith merely, and not an actual withdrawal of the Father's favor and communion. We hold, however, that the philosophy of the subject proves that it was the latter, and that this was a necessary part of our Lord's suffering as the sinner. The penalty of Adam's transgression was not only death, but additionally separation or alienation from him of divine favor and communion: consequently, when our Lord Jesus took Adam's place and suffered in his room and stead, the just for the unjust, that he might redeem us to God by his precious blood, --it was not only necessary that he should die on our behalf, but it was also necessary that he should experience the full cutting off and separation from the Father, which was a *part of the penalty* of Adam's transgression. He was not alienated or separated from the Father as a sinner throughout the three and a half years in which he was laying down his life; neither did he suffer the full penalty during those three and a half years; but the moment of crisis came at the cross, and for at least a brief period he must be deprived of the Father's fellowship, and must thus die--*as a sinner*, for our sins; in order that "as by a man came death, by a man also should come the resurrection of the dead."

When we consider our dear Master's experience, we do well not to judge much from the last words of the dying, respecting their own spiritual state. False theories may beget false hopes in some, and lead them to believe that they are "sweeping through the gates of the New Jerusalem," when really they are sweeping through the gates into the great prisonhouse of death. The most extravagant dying expressions were not made, so far as the record goes, by the Lord or his

inspired Apostles. Nevertheless they had a good hope, a firm hope, a Scriptural hope, a hope which gave them strength for the battle of life and to its very close to be faithful to the Lord and to the Word of his testimony: on the contrary, many of those who die with extravagant expressions of hope on their lips were less faithful to the Lord, less faithful to his Word, and less fully consecrated to his service. Let our faith, confidence and rejoicing be as was that of the Master and the Apostles, not so much in the experience and feelings of the moment as in God's Word and its testimony, --the "more sure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place."

Matthew does not record the words of our Lord when "he cried again with a loud voice," but we have them from Luke and from John. He said, "It is finished! Father into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Many false teachers tell us that nothing was finished, and declare that no sacrifice for sins was needed, and that none was given; but the testimony of the Scriptures is explicit on this subject that without a sacrifice, "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins." Our Lord's sacrifice dated from the time that he reached manhood's estate, thirty years, when he came promptly to John at Jordan, and was baptized--thus outwardly symbolizing his full consecration of himself unto death, in doing the Father's will. The sacrifice there begun was faithfully continued down to his last moment. When he had endured to the very last all the ignominy, all the shame, and was finally cut off from communion with the Father-- this was the last, and so our Lord indicated by the words, "It is finished." His work was finished; the redemption price was finished; the sufferings were over; he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do, so far as its shameful and ignominious features were concerned. Another part of his work remained and is yet unfinished, namely, the work of blessing all the families of the earth, bestowing upon them the gracious favor and opportunities of eternal life secured to them justly by his sacrifice for sins.

He gave up the ghost, that is the spirit. What spirit? He did not yield up his spirit body; for at this time he had no spirit body. Thirty-four years before he had laid aside spirit conditions and nature, to become partaker of a human nature, through his mother Mary--the spirit of life which belonged to him there having been transferred to human conditions. He enjoyed and exercised this spirit of life or life-power, as the

animating, vivifying principle of his human body, for thirty-three and a half years; now he was surrendering it up in death--dissolution. The crucified flesh was to be his no longer, for, as the Apostle declares, he took upon him the form of a servant, *for* the suffering of death, and not *for* the keeping of that form of a servant to all eternity. The promise of the Father was that he should be glorified with himself, and even with a still higher glory than he had with the Father before the world was,--and that was a spiritual glory, and not a human glory. He left spiritual conditions when he "was *made flesh* and dwelt amongst us;" but he trusted in the Father that when he had finished the work given him to do he should be again received up into glory--the spirit condition. Thus he said to the disciples, "What and if the Son of Man should ascend up where he was before?"

His commitment of his spirit to the Father's care implied therefore that he knew thoroughly just what death is--a cessation of being--yet had confidence in the Father that he would not be permitted to remain forever in death, but would be granted *again*, in resurrection, the spirit of life which he now laid down in harmony with the Father's will. He knew and had foretold to his disciples that he would be raised from the dead on the third day. He recognized that his spirit of life, his vitality, his being, came from the Father, originally, and was subject to the Father's power and care: and knowing that the Father had promised to give him *being again*, he here merely expresses his confidence in this promise. And his confidence was abundantly fulfilled, in that God raised him from the dead, highly exalted in nature, not only above human nature but far above angels and principalities and powers," to the very highest plane of the spirit nature, namely, to the divine nature.

And, remarkable as it may seem, this is the very same invitation that is extended to the Church of this Gospel age, that they may have fellowship with their Master's sufferings, and eventually have fellowship also with him in glory, and as "partakers of the divine nature" and its glory, honor and immortality, far above the honor and nature of angels, tho that be grand, and a little higher than perfect mankind. (**2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 2:7; Psa. 8:5.**) In view of all this we may well exhort one another to "lay aside every weight, and to run with patience the race set before us in the gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he shall become the finisher of it."

CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY.

--MAY 26, *MARK 15:22-37*;--*MATT. 27:31-66*;
LUKE 23:26-56; *JOHN 19:16-42*--

Golden Text--"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."--*Rom. 5:8*.

VERSE 22. The sentence of crucifixion having been obtained, the excited mob, inspired with Satanic zeal, hurried the prisoner to the place of execution, which was reached about nine o'clock Friday morning. What an awful night he had passed! Beginning with the sad scenes of the last supper with his disciples, call to mind the agony of Gethsemane, the hurried march to Annas, then to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod and back again to Pilate; how during all the night he was most shamefully treated.--mocked, buffeted, spit upon, reviled, ridiculed, falsely accused and finally crowned with cruel thorns and scourged.

After such experiences it seems marvelous that any vitality remained for the ordeal of crucifixion. It would seem that the intense and long continued nervous strain and weariness and physical suffering would have exhausted the forces of nature; but our Lord, as a perfect man, had extraordinary powers of endurance, though he had voluntarily sacrificed much of physical strength in the labors of his ministry. That he was greatly exhausted, however, is manifest from the fact that the bearing of his cross to the place of crucifixion was imposed upon another.--*Luke 23:26*.

Verse 23. Wine mingled with myrrh was offered as an anaesthetic to relieve the sense of pain. It is said that some of the women of Jerusalem undertook this office of mercy on behalf of criminals to be executed by the terrible methods of the Romans. Jesus acknowledged the kindness of the offer by tasting it, but declined it further, preferring to have his mind awake and clear to the last. Had he taken it, we should have missed the tenderness which committed his mother to the care of John, and those last words so full of meaning to us--"It is finished." And Peter would have missed the look of sorrow that reminded him of the Lord's love and of his disappointment in him, that quickly called him to repentance, and we should all have failed to realize how much the Lord's thoughts were upon others even amidst the agonies of such a horrible death.

Verses 25-28. The crucifixion occurred at about nine o'clock A.M., and ended in death at 3 P.M., the circumstance of the company of the two thieves being in fulfilment of *Isa. 53:12*--"He was numbered with the transgressors."

The saying of the mocking priests and scribes, "He saved others; himself he cannot save,"--had indeed a deeper significance than they realized. He could not save others and save himself too; for only *by the sacrifice of himself* could he hope to save others; and therefore it was that he bore the penalty of our sins in his own body on the tree; that of himself he laid down his life, which no man had power to take from him except as he permitted it, which willing permission was so manifest in his conduct--in knowingly receiving the betrayer's kiss in Gethsemane; in freely surrendering himself to the Roman soldiers; in maintaining silence in the presence of his accusers; in freely confessing before them his claims of Messiahship, which they counted blasphemy; in silently accepting the sentence of crucifixion without an effort or a word in self-defence. Truly, "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Why? Because he desired to save others, and knew that their salvation required the sacrifice of himself.

And so, as the Prophet (*Isa. 53:5,12*) declared, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "He poured out his soul unto death,...and bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Oh, what love, what fortitude was here displayed! Yet men "esteemed him smitten *of God* and afflicted." And this was probably one of the severest of our Lord's trials--to be esteemed as an offender against God and as under the divine wrath.

In the same way the afflictions of the Lord's people are often misinterpreted by the world, as well as by the unthoughtful among professed Christians. But let such consider that "the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord;" that all who will live godly shall suffer persecution; that during this age evil is in the ascendancy, and therefore the righteous suffer; that Satan is the prince of this world; and that until he is bound righteousness shall not be exalted. This is the time for the righteous --the embryo Kingdom of heaven--to suffer violence, and when the violent may take it by force. And if Christ our Lord and Head thus suffered, let all who suffer with him for righteousness' and truth's sake be comforted with the same divine

assurance that comforted him. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him;...and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."--*Psa. 37:6,7.*

Some of the friends of the Lord were also present on this occasion with their love and sympathy--Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and other women who followed the mob, some of whom probably offered the wine and myrrh, to whose weeping and bewailing Jesus replied, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children; ...for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (*Luke 23:27-31.*) This he said in reference to the atrocities which should mark the overthrow of their nation and the destruction of Jerusalem, which would display the same wicked spirit which was then being manifested toward him. And it was even so; for the troubles upon that people were not alone from enemies without, but also from civil strife; for every man's hand was against his neighbor. It is said that at the time of the siege of Jerusalem hundreds of Jews were crucified at once, and left hanging in sight of the city walls.

Verses 33,34. The darkness that brooded over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour seems to have been a supernatural darkness; for an eclipse of the sun was impossible during the full moon of the passover time. It was doubtless sent as an expression of the

divine wrath, and as typical of the darkness of alienation from God into which that long favored nation had plunged by this act.

The expression of verse 34 manifests the dread realization of imminent death. Jehovah's sustaining power must necessarily be withdrawn and the bitter dregs of the cup of suffering be drained to make the sacrifice complete. But when the heart and flesh failed, it was difficult to realize the significance of this: hence the startled inquiry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Through all his sufferings the divine grace had thus far sustained him, but now he must sink beneath the rod and be cut off from the favor of Him in whose favor is life, that so, by his stripes, we might be healed.

Verse 37. This last cry, which summoned and exhausted all the remaining vitality was the last triumph of victorious faith. Though he realized that the divine favor, which had always hitherto sustained his being, must now be withdrawn because he stood in the sinner's place as the vicarious sin-offering, faith, still anchored to the promises of God to be realized beyond the vail of the flesh, sweetly and confidently commended his being to the Father. This the Apostle Peter tells all them to do who suffer for righteousness' sake, saying, "Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."--*1 Pet. 4:19.*

=====

Z '05, 152 – 156; R3560

THE GREATEST EVENT OF HISTORY

--*JOHN 19:17-30.*--MAY 28.--

Golden Text:--"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."--*1 Cor. 15:3*

CALVARY was the scene of the most wonderful event of history, the fulcrum as it were upon which divine Love and Justice operated for the rolling away of the curse resting upon humanity. Its site is not definitely known, yet the Latin word Calvary furnishes a clue, being an equivalent to the Hebrew word golgotha and signifying "the place of the skull." There is a bare knoll of a hill, with two caves in the front, which, looked at from a distance has rather the appearance of a skull, the caves and the brush growing therein representing the eye sockets. It is presumed that this was the place of the crucifixion. The same custom of describing rocks and hills by things which they somewhat resemble still prevails. Thus we have Sentinel Dome and Bridal Vail Falls in the Yosemite, Pulpit Rock and Teakettle Rock in the Rocky Mountains, the Owl's Head in the White Mountains and Caesar's Head in the Blue Ridge.

Crucifixion is a most horrible and torturous form of death, yet it was not the torture of death which our Redeemer suffered on our behalf which so much gives us a feeling of sympathy and sorrow as our minds go back to Calvary and the scenes preceding it. Two others were crucified with Jesus; many others had suffered a similar death before and since, and some, we may presume, suffered as much or more agony through longer-drawn-out torture, gradual burning at the stake, lacerations, etc. The thought which impresses our hearts most deeply is that our dear Savior's experiences not only were undeserved, unmerited by the one "who went about doing good," but that his experiences were in connection with the payment of our penalty, so that "by his stripes we are healed."--*Isa. 53:5.*

"THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINETH US"

The thought that Christ died for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God--that we might be restored to divine favor, released from the just curse or sentence of death which was upon us--this thought moves our hearts to loving sympathy. "The love of Christ constraineth us; and we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead [under just sentence of death]: and that we who live should henceforth not live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us."--*2 Cor. 5:14,15*.

"In the cross of Christ we glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

Proportionately as in our day the D.D.'s and college professors and the "wise of this world" are denying the necessity for our Lord's death and the value of the precious blood as an atonement for the sins of mankind, in that same proportion must those whose eyes have been opened by the grace of God to see the divine plan emphasize more and more the value of the cross as the basis of reconciliation between God and man. There is a great falling away in our day from this foundation feature of the Gospel. Jesus is presented as good, noble, a wonderful and wise teacher, whose words are suitable for texts and comments; but the sin of the world is denied when it is claimed that man is by an evolutionary process rising from the monkey condition to the divine likeness, and if there is no sin of the world to be atoned for, of course, the Scriptural record that Jesus made atonement for the sins of the world is in error, and this is the view that is rapidly spreading throughout Christendom and destroying all true Christian faith.

Any other faith is not the true Christian faith, not the faith once delivered to the saints, not the faith that is pleasing to God, not the faith that is the basis for justification and forgiveness of sins, not the faith that is to be respected and honored, blessed and rewarded by the Lord in due time. We cannot enunciate this matter [R3561 : page 153] too distinctly, even though it may offend some to be told that they are not Christians in the Scriptural sense of the word when they no longer hold the doctrine of the atonement through the blood of the cross--through the death of Jesus. Ultimately this doctrine will be seen to be the touchstone which will clearly show who are the Lord's and who are not. Those who lose this hub or center of faith, lose all part and lot in Christ so far, at least, as the present age is concerned. They are no more Christians than are Mohammedans or Jews or Confucians or Brahmins. Jews, Mohammedans and infidels believe that Jesus lived and that he died and that he was a great teacher, but this does not make

them Christians and does not justify them. We are justified, as the Apostle points out, "Through faith in his blood." --*Rom. 3:25*.

"VIA DOLOROSA"--THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The way from Pilate's judgment hall to Calvary was indeed a sorrowful way, a doleful way. Pilate felt uncomfortable in having done the only thing he could reasonably have been expected to do under all the circumstances. The chief priests and doctors of divinity had scored a victory, and might be expected to exult as they saw their victim led as a lamb to the slaughter. Yet we must give them credit for some conscience and must suppose that they were far from happy; that although they had said to Pilate, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" they felt a mysterious dread of this wonderful person against whom they were prevailing. To suppose that their hearts were not troubled would be to discredit them everyway. On the way tender women, not disciples of Jesus, wept as Jesus passed by. Pilate had endeavored to appeal to the accusers of Jesus by having him scourged and then presenting him before them, crying, *Ecce Homo*-- Behold the man! Look at the man whom you are asking me to crucify: no man in all your nation has such a face and form as his; not one of you for a moment considers that he is a wicked man; his face shows to the contrary. Will you not be satisfied? Will not your anger against him be appeased by the scourging which he has received? Will you not consent that I should let him go? But all these appeals were futile. His enemies were so filled with bitterness and envy that they were blind to his personal attractions. These, however, appealed to the women as he passed; they wept. Jesus was the most composed of all in that scene, because he had the assurance that he was doing the Father's will. This assurance had kept him calm and unmoved from the moment the angel appeared in Gethsemane to give him the word of divine favor and thus strengthen him. He was ready to endure anything that would be the Father's will, that would carry out the Father's plan, he had such confidence in the wisdom, the love, the justice and the power of God. To the weeping women he said, "Weep not for me, weep for yourselves"-- doubtless having in mind the awful trouble which thirty-seven years after came upon that city.

"LET HIM TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW ME"

Jesus, bearing his cross, headed the procession, accompanied by four Roman soldiers; following came the two thieves with their crosses and four soldiers guarding each, the whole under the charge of a Centurion. Our Redeemer, less coarse by nature, less

animal, more intelligent than the thieves, was probably less able naturally than they to carry the heavy timber of the cross--besides, he had been under a nervous strain and without food for about twelve hours. Evidently he was scarcely able to carry his load, and the Centurion compelled Simon of Cyrene, a countryman, to bear the cross after Jesus. Whether this means that he walked behind Jesus in the procession, carrying the cross, or that he carried the hinder part of the cross with Jesus, is uncertain; but in any event he had a most glorious opportunity, even though it was compulsory.

Many of the Lord's dear people, reading the account, have wished that they could have had a share in the carrying of that cross. Where were Peter, James and John and the others? Alas, they allowed fear to hinder them, to deprive them of a most glorious service. While thinking of this it is well to remember that our Lord has graciously provided that all of his followers may share in the carrying of his cross. The offense of the cross, the weight of the cross, has not ceased; the cross of Christ is still in the world; the privilege is still with us to bear it with him, following after him. Although the apostles lost the privilege of bearing the literal cross for Jesus, they gloriously recovered from their fear, and we have the record of their noble service, bearing the cross of Christ for all the years of their lives afterwards.

Let us love much, and let us show our love by our zeal in cross-bearing; and if at any time that zeal grows cold, let us remember the axiom, "No cross, no crown;" let us remember the Apostle's words, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him; if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." Yet neither the fear of death nor the appreciation of the crown must be the controlling motive. The mainspring of our devotion to the Lord must be an appreciation of what he has done for us, our love to him, and our desire to do what would please him, and thus show a responsive love. Let us remember that while the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, was glorified long ago, there are still about us in the world those whom he recognizes as his brethren, as "members of his body," and that whatsoever we do to one of the least of these, whatever assistance we render to these in the bearing of their crosses, is so much that he will appreciate as manifesting our love for him, as so much that is done unto him.

"HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS"

Our Lord's crucifixion between two thieves may be viewed from various standpoints. To himself it would mean the depths of humiliation. Every noble and pure man or woman prizing purity in his own heart would find it specially detestable to be so misunderstood as to

be numbered with transgressors, murderers, thieves--accounted one of them. And if this is true with us in our imperfect condition of mind and heart, and our imperfect appreciation of justice and of sin, how much more intense must this feeling have been in the perfect one, our Lord. How he must have loathed sin, how utterly opposed to it in every sense of the word he must have been, and how much more shame he must have felt than we could possibly have felt in his position. From the heavenly Father's standpoint this permission that his Son be numbered with the transgressors was evidently to be a demonstration to angels and to men of the Son's loyalty of heart to the utmost extreme, as we read, "He humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross."

Thus the Lord demonstrated, not only by his willingness to die, but his willingness to die in the most despicable manner, his full self-renunciation, the complete deadness of his own will and the thorough aliveness of his own heart and mind to the Father's will. In all this he became an illustration to his followers, as the Apostle suggests, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God [no matter how deep the humiliation which obedience to God may bring] that he may exalt you in due time." From the standpoint of the priests and Pharisees the Lord's crucifixion with the two thieves was specially desirable; it would help to keep the people from thinking of him as a martyr, it would demean and degrade him before the people, and make any ashamed to acknowledge themselves the followers of a religious teacher who was publicly executed as a malefactor, as an enemy of God and man. How could it be expected that any could ever glory in the cross of Christ? But how wonderfully God's plans overrule all human arrangements, and make even the wrath and envy and villainy of the human heart work out to his praise and in accord with his plan?

KILLING THE PRINCE OF LIFE

The distance from Pilate's palace to the Place of the Skull is not great, though the latter is outside the city wall. The spot was soon reached, the crosses were laid upon the ground, and the soldiers quickly stripped the prisoners and nailed them, probably with wooden spikes, to the crosses which they then lifted and dropped into the holes previously prepared for them, the feet of the crucified coming within about two feet of the ground. The agony incident to such a proceeding can be better imagined than described, especially at the moment when the cross dropped into the socket, and when the weight of the body together with the swinging and surging and jolting of the cross would make the pain terrible in the extreme, more to one of refined temperament and nervous system than to the coarser and more brutal--severer, therefore, to

our Lord than to his two companions. Well may the devoted disciples of Jesus say to themselves, "My Lord bore this for me," and we may ask ourselves in turn what have we borne for him of shame or ignominy or pain? The very thought of this should make us ashamed to mention boastfully any trials we may have endured, and also make us more courageous to be patient and to endure all things which divine providence may permit to come to our cup because of our discipleship.

THE KING OF THE JEWS

It was Pilate's turn to get even with the envious and malicious Jewish rulers who had forced him, contrary to his will as well as contrary to justice, to crucify Jesus. It was customary to publish the crime for which the execution took place by a printed notice over the head of the victim. In Jesus' case he wrote, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," Mark gives the inscription, "The King of the Jews," and Luke, "This is the King of the Jews." All three may be correct, for the notice was written in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

In his trial before the High Priest he was sentenced to death as a blasphemer in calling himself the Son of God; but, as we have seen, this charge would not stand before Pilate, since the Roman government cared nothing whether a man blasphemed one god or another. To secure his execution by the Romans he was charged with rebellion against Rome, claiming that he was the King of the Jews. Pilate's decision not to alter the writing was correct, and ultimately all the blind eyes of the world shall be opened to this great fact that Jesus was indeed divinely anointed to be the King of earth. But as he said, "My Kingdom is not from hence"--not yet. As he represents elsewhere, the time is coming when "he shall take unto himself his great power and reign." Those who acknowledge him as King now are a very small and very insignificant people in the world--"not many great, not many wise, not many learned"-- "chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith."

To some it seems to be a pleasing fiction to say that Jesus is now the King of the world and is reigning, that Christendom is his Kingdom, and that the 400,000,000 of nominal professors are his loyal subjects. Those who thus conclude are nearly as blind and prejudiced as were the doctors of divinity who secured our Lord's death. It would be as truthful to call black white as to call "Christendom" the empire of Christ and its people the servants of Christ. "His servants ye are to whom ye render service," was our Lord's standpoint, and accordingly the Lord has few real servants in the world to-day--the great majority are serving sin in some of its numerous forms of selfishness, and are glad to think that the day of Christ, the day of the Anointed, when

he shall take to himself his great power and reign under the whole heaven, is far distant.

Those who "love his appearing," whose souls long for the presence of the King and the inauguration of his reign of righteousness in the earth are a woefully small number. But all who are of the "little flock," soldiers of the cross, should specially appreciate one another's fellowship and should be ready, as the Scriptures exhort, to "lay down their lives for the brethren." And he who would lay down his life for a brother will surely be careful in all his dealings to do nothing against the Truth but for the Truth, nothing to stumble any, but everything possible to assist the members of the body of Christ, "The feet of Him."

"SITTING DOWN THEY WATCHED HIM THERE"

--MATT. 27:36.--

The Roman soldiers, ignorant of God and the principles of righteousness--their highest conception of responsibility being to obey orders--seemed to have no heart whatever; the quivering flesh of their victims seemed to have touched no tender spot. They sat down and looked at him, and straightway began to divide his garments amongst them. "The usual dress of a Jew consisted of five parts: the head dress, the shoes, the outer garment or toga, the girdle (one part for each of the soldiers) and the chiton"--the tunic, in our text called a coat--a kind of shirt fitting somewhat closely and reaching from the neck to the ankles, for which they cast lots.

As those soldiers coldly looked at the Lamb of God, who was suffering the Just for the unjust as their redemption price, and as they were dividing his raiment as their perquisites, they resembled to a considerable degree the whole of "Christendom" from that time to the present. Millions in all parts of the civilized world have heard of Jesus and his love and his sacrifice and that it was on our behalf, and are still totally unmoved, unconcerned, without thankfulness or appreciation. They are willing, indeed, to receive and divide amongst themselves day by day the various blessings and advantages which have come to them through his death, yet even these are received without appreciation or thankfulness or gratitude. The most kindly view of such an attitude of heart is that which the Apostle has expressed, saying, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of God's goodness shining in the face of Jesus Christ should shine into their hearts."

WITH HIM IN HIS DYING HOUR

With the Lord in his dying hour were four of his very special friends: his mother, her cousin the wife of Cleopas, Mary Magdalene and John. We are not to

think too severely of the apparent lack of courage on the part of the others of Jesus' friends. The popular bitterness which had led to the crucifixion of Jesus had extended in considerable measure to his followers. It was natural that they should be afraid; it had even been hinted that Lazarus would be put to death also. The three women with him might reasonably feel themselves free from danger of molestation notwithstanding their manifestation of interest in the suffering one; and as for John, we remember that he had a friend in the High Priest's household, who permitted him to be present when Jesus was first brought before the High Priest and when Peter was afraid to be known even in the outer apartments. Quite probably the High Priest's servant was present at the time of the crucifixion to give a report of the whole proceedings. John's courage to be present may have been influenced by these circumstances. It was at this time that Jesus, although in great pain, commended his mother to his disciple's care--"Woman, behold thy Son;" and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother." We cannot show our sympathy at Jesus' cross, but we can lend our presence and aid to dear "members of his body" in their dark hours; and he will count it as done to himself.

Another Scripture remained to be fulfilled. The prophet had declared of him, "They gave me gall and vinegar to drink." This would be another mark or identification of him, and is given as the reason why Jesus mentioned this thirst. Doubtless, with a fever raging such as would be induced by the crucifixion, he had been thirsting for quite a while, but now the time was come to express the matter, to give occasion for the fulfilment of the Scripture respecting him. Gall and vinegar was given him, not as an injury but as a kindness. It was supposed that the mixture would assuage thirst to some degree.

Having thus fulfilled the various Scriptures relating to his career, our Lord realized that the end of his course had come. It was probably at this juncture that the Father's fellowship was withdrawn from him for a moment; that for a little space at least he should experience all that the sinner could ever experience of the withdrawal of divine favor; for he was being treated as the sinner for us that we on his account might be treated of God as righteous. Of all our Lord's experiences we believe that this moment, in which the Father completely hid his face from him, was the most trying moment, the severest ordeal, and the one apparently which our Lord had not foreseen. Bereft of

every earthly comfort and favor, privilege and blessing, up to this moment he possessed a realization of fellowship and communion with the Father; but now for that to be taken away, that upon which his whole life had depended, that was the severest trial.

In agony he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! What have I done to cause a cloud to come between thee and me? Have I not been faithful even unto death?" He probably soon realized the meaning of this experience, that it was necessary for him thus to fill up the cup of suffering and to demonstrate to the very limit his loyalty and obedience and to thus fully and completely meet the penalty against our race. Probably still under this cloud but with this realization he cried, "It is finished!" and died. We often speak of people dying of broken hearts, and use the term figuratively, but so far as can be known our Lord experienced this very matter actually. Apparently he died by the actual bursting of his heart. It is the tendency of deep grief to interfere with the circulation of the blood and to cause a pressure upon the heart. We have all felt this at times--a weight and heaviness of heart under certain peculiar nervous strains. This in our Lord's case seems to have been so intense that the heart was literally ruptured. He died of a broken heart.

A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS.

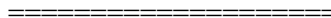
A little talk with Jesus
At the closing of the day,--
How it quiets every anxious fear,
And drives our doubts away.

A little talk with Jesus,--
How it soothes the aching brain,
How it rests the weary, fainting heart,
And makes us strong again.

A little talk with Jesus,--
How it lights the darkest hour,
How it keeps us "watching unto prayer,"
And foils the Tempter's power.

A little talk with Jesus,--
There can nothing take its place,--
How we long to reach our heavenly home,
And see him face to face!

--G. W. Seibert



**AN ANCIENT AND INTERESTING DOCUMENT,
FOUND IN THE VATICAN AT ROME, WHICH PURPORTS TO BE
THE ORIGINAL REPORT OF PILATE, ROMAN GOVERNOR OF JUDEA,
TO THE
EMPEROR TIBERIUS CAESAR:
EXPLANATORY OF
THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE TUMULT IN JERUSALEM, IN
CONNECTION WITH
THE DEATH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH.**

The Public is indebted to the energy of a Christian minister, W. D. Mahan by name, for calling attention to and securing an English translation of this interesting document. He first heard of it through a German student who had spent a large portion of several years in searching for curiosities in the immense library of the Vatican at Rome. The German Professor did not consider the MS. of sufficient interest to take a copy of it, but years afterward made mention of it to the minister mentioned. The latter felt a great interest in what he had heard, and finally he wrote to his friend, the German Professor, who meantime had returned to Westphalia, Germany, requesting that the latter, who was intimate with Father Freelinhusen-- chief guardian of the Vatican--would undertake to procure a translation of the MS. into English.

This was finally accomplished at a cost to Mr. Mahan of seventy-two dollars and forty-four cents.

The parties concerned in procuring this translation are unknown to us, but the circumstances leave no room for questioning the fact. As to whether or not the Vatican Manuscript is what it purports to be, each must judge for himself. Certain it is that the account does not contradict, but fully corroborates, the accounts given us by the Apostles in the Bible. We give here

**AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE
LETTER,
PURPORTING TO BE PILATE'S.**

To TIBERIUS CAESAR--Emperor.
Noble Sovereign, Greeting:

The events of the last few days in my province have been of such a character that I thought well to report the details as they have occurred, as I should not be surprised if in the course of time they may change the destiny of our nation; for it seems of late that the gods have ceased to be propitious. I am almost ready to say,

"Cursed be the day that I succeeded Valerius Gratus in the government of Judea."

On my arrival at Jerusalem I took possession of the Judgment Hall and ordered a splendid feast to be prepared, to which I invited the tetrarch of Galilee, with the high priest and his officers. At the appointed hour no guests appeared. This was an insult offered to my dignity. A few days after, the high priest deigned to pay me a visit. His deportment was grave and deceitful. He pretended that his religion forbade him and his attendants to sit down at the table of the Romans, and to offer up libations with them. I thought it expedient to accept of his excuse, but from that moment I was convinced that the conquered had declared themselves the enemies of the conquerors. It seems to me that of all conquered cities, Jerusalem is the most difficult to govern!

So turbulent were the people that I lived in momentary dread of an insurrection. To repress it I had but a single centurion, and a handful of soldiers. I requested a reinforcement from the Governor of Syria, who informed me that he had scarcely troops sufficient to defend his own province. An insatiate thirst for conquest--to extend our empire beyond the means of defending it--I fear will be the means of overthrowing our noble government.

Among the various rumors that came to my ears, there was one that attracted my attention in particular. A young man, it was said, had appeared in Galilee, preaching with a noble unction a new law, in the name of the gods that had sent him. At first I was apprehensive that his design was to stir up the people against the Romans, but soon were my fears dispelled. Jesus of Nazareth spake rather as a friend of the Romans than of the Jews.

One day, in passing by the place of Siloe, where there was a great concourse of people, I observed, in the midst of the group, a young man who was leaning against a tree, calmly addressing the multitude. I was told that this was Jesus. This I could easily have

expected; so great was the difference between him and those who were listening to him. His golden-colored hair and beard gave to his appearance a celestial aspect. He appeared to be about thirty years of age. Never have I seen a sweeter or more serene countenance. What a contrast between him and his hearers with their black beards and tawny complexion. Unwilling to interrupt him by my presence, I continued my walk; but signified to my secretary to join the group and listen. My secretary's name is Manlius. He is the grandson of the chief of the conspirators who encamped in Etruria, waiting Catiline. Manlius was anciently an inhabitant of Judea and well acquainted with the Hebrew language. He is devoted to me and worthy of my confidence. On entering the Judgment Hall, I found Manlius, who related to me the words Jesus had pronounced at Siloe. Never have I heard in the Pettico, nor in the works of the philosophers, anything that can compare to the maxims of Jesus.

One of the rebellious Jews, so numerous in Jerusalem, having asked him if it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar, Jesus replied, "Render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and unto God the things that are God's." It was on account of the wisdom of his sayings that I granted so much liberty to the Nazarene, for it was in my power to have had him arrested and exiled to Pontus; but this would have been contrary to the justice which has always characterized the Romans. This man was neither seditious nor rebellious, and I extended to him my protection unknown, perhaps, to himself. He was at liberty to act, to speak, to assemble and address the people, to choose disciples unrestrained by any Pretorian mandate. Should it ever happen--may the gods ever avert the omen--should it ever happen, I say, that the religion of our forefathers be supplanted by the religion of Jesus, it will be to this noble toleration that Rome shall owe her premature obsequies, while I, miserable wretch, shall have been the instrument of what Christians call providence, and we, destiny.

But this unlimited freedom granted Jesus provoked the Jews; not the poor, but the rich and powerful. It is true that Jesus was severe on the latter, and this was a political reason, in my opinion, not to control the liberty of the Nazarene. "Scribes and Pharisees," he would say to them, "you are a race of vipers; you resemble painted sepulchers." At other times, he would sneer at the proud alms of the publican, telling him that the mite of the widow was more precious in the sight of God.

New complaints were daily made at the Judgment Hall against the insolence of the Jews. I was even informed that some misfortune would befall him--that it would not be the first time that Jerusalem had stoned those who called themselves prophets--and if the

Pretorium refused justice, an appeal would be made to Caesar.

However, my conduct was approved by the Senate, and I was promised a reinforcement after the termination of the Parthian war. Being too weak to suppress a sedition, I resolved upon adopting a measure that promised to establish the tranquility of the city, without subjecting the Pretorium to humiliating concessions.

I wrote to Jesus requesting an interview with him at the Judgment Hall, and he came. You know that in my veins flows the Spanish, mixed with Roman blood, as incapable of fear as it is of puerile emotion. When the Nazarene made his appearance I was walking in my court, and my feet seemed fastened with an iron hand to the marble pavement, and I trembled in every limb as a guilty culprit, though he was calm--the Nazarene--calm as innocence. When he came up to me, he stopped, and by a signal seemed to say to me, "I am here." For some time I contemplated with admiration and awe this extraordinary type of man--a type of man unknown to our numerous painters, who have given form and figure to all the gods and heroes.

"Jesus," said I to him at last--and my tongue faltered--"Jesus of Nazareth, I have granted you for the last three years ample freedom of speech, nor do I regret it. Your words are those of a sage. I know not whether you have read Socrates, or Plato, but this I know, that there is in your discourses a majestic simplicity that elevates you far above those philosophers. The Emperor is informed of it, and I, his humble representative in this community, am glad of having allowed you that liberty, of which you are so worthy.

"However, I must not conceal from you the fact that your discourses have raised up against you powerful and inveterate enemies. Neither is this surprising. Socrates had his enemies, and he fell a victim to their hatred. Yours are doubly incensed against you on account of your sayings, and against me on account of the liberty extended towards you. They even accuse me of being indirectly leagued with you, for the purpose of depriving the Hebrews of the little civil power which Rome has left them. My request--I do not say my order-- is, that you be more circumspect in the future, and more tender in arousing the pride of your enemies, lest they raise against you the stupid populace, and compel me to employ the instruments of justice."

The Nazarene calmly replied:

"Prince of the earth, your words proceed not from true wisdom. Say to the torrent, Stop in the midst of the mountain home! because it will uproot the trees of the valley. The torrent will answer you, that it must obey the laws of the Creator. God alone knows whither flows the torrent. Verily, I say unto you,

before the Rose of Sharon blossoms, the blood of the Just shall be spilt." "Your blood shall not be spilt," replied I with emotion, "You are more precious, in my estimation, on account of your wisdom, than all the turbulent and proud Pharisees, who abuse the freedom granted them by the Romans, conspire against Caesar, and construe our bounty into fear. Insolent wretches, they are not aware that the wolf of the timber sometimes clothes himself with the skin of the sheep. I will protect you against them. My Palace of Justice is open to you as an asylum."

Jesus carelessly shook his head, and said, with a grace and a divine smile, "When the day shall have come, there will be no asylum for the Son of Man, neither in the earth, nor under the earth. The asylum of the Just is there," pointing to the heavens. "That which is written in the books of the prophets must be accomplished."

"Young man," answered I, mildly, "you oblige me to convert my request into an order. The safety of the province, which has been confided to my care, requires it. You must observe more moderation in your discourses. Do not infringe. My orders you know. May happiness attend you. Farewell."

"Prince of the earth," replied Jesus, "I came not to bring war into the world, but peace, love and charity. I was born the same day on which Augustus Caesar gave peace to the Roman world. Persecution proceeds not from me. I expect it from others, and will meet it in obedience to the will of my Father, who has shown me the way. Restrain, therefore, your worldly prudence. It is not in your power to arrest the victim at the foot of the Altar of expiation."

So saying, he disappeared like a bright shadow behind the curtains of the palace.

[Concluded in our next issue.]

Z '92, 51 – 53; R1367

VOL. XIII. FEBRUARY 15, 1892. NO. 4.

**AN ANCIENT AND INTERESTING DOCUMENT,
FOUND IN THE VATICAN AT ROME, WHICH PURPORTS TO BE
THE ORIGINAL REPORT OF PILATE, ROMAN GOVERNOR OF JUDEA,
TO THE
EMPEROR TIBERIUS CAESAR:
EXPLANATORY OF
THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE TUMULT IN JERUSALEM, IN
CONNECTION WITH
THE DEATH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH.**

(CONCLUDED FROM OUR LAST ISSUE.)

To Herod, who then reigned in Galilee, the enemies of Jesus addressed themselves to wreak their vengeance on the Nazarene. Had Herod consulted his own inclination, he would have ordered Jesus immediately to be put to death; but though proud of his royal dignity, yet he was afraid of committing an act that might diminish his influence with the Senate. Herod called on me one day at the Pretorium, and on rising to take leave, after some insignificant conversation, he asked my opinion concerning the Nazarene. I replied that Jesus appeared to be one of those great philosophers that great nations sometimes produce, that his doctrines were by no means sacrilegious, and that the intention of Rome was, to leave him to that freedom of speech which was justified by his actions. Herod smiled maliciously, and saluting me with an ironical respect he departed.

The great feast of the Jews was approaching, and the intention of their religious rulers was to avail themselves of the popular exultation which always manifests itself at the solemnities of a Passover. The city was overflowing with a tumultuous populace clamoring for the death of the Nazarene. My emissaries informed me that the treasure of the temple had been employed in bribing the people. The danger was pressing. A Roman centurion had been insulted. I wrote to the prefect of Syria for a hundred foot soldiers, and as many cavalry. He declined. I saw myself alone, with a handful of veterans, in the midst of a rebellious city, too weak to suppress a disorder, and having no other choice left but to tolerate it. The seditious rabble had seized Jesus, and although they felt that they had nothing to fear from the Pretorium, believing with their leaders that I winked at their

sedition, continued vociferating, "Crucify him! crucify him!"

Three powerful parties had combined together at that time against Jesus. First, the Herodians, and the Sadducees, whose seditious conduct seems to have proceeded from double motives: they hated the Nazarene, and were impatient of the Roman yoke. They could never forgive me for having entered their holy city with banners that bore the image of the Roman Emperor, and although in this instance I had ignorantly committed the fatal error, yet the sacrilege did not appear less heinous in their eyes. Another grievance also rankled in their bosoms: I had proposed to employ a part of the treasure of the Temple in erecting edifices of public utility, which proposal was scowled at.

The Pharisees, too, were avowed enemies of Jesus, and they cared not for our government. They bore with bitterness the severe reprimands which the Nazarene, for three years, had been throwing out against them wherever he went. Too weak and pusillanimous to act by themselves, they had eagerly embraced the quarrels of the Herodians and the Sadducees. Besides these three parties, I had to contend against the reckless and profligate populace, always ready to join a sedition, and to profit by the disorder and confusion resulting therefrom.

Jesus was dragged before the High Priest and condemned to death. It was then that Caiaphas, the High Priest, performed a derisory act of submission. He sent his prisoner to me to pronounce his condemnation. I answered him that as Jesus was a Galilean, the affair came under Herod's jurisdiction; and I ordered him to be sent thither. That wily tetrarch professed his humility, and protesting his deference to me, the Lieutenant of Caesar, recommitted the fate of the man to my hands. Soon my palace assumed the aspect of a besieged citadel. Every moment increased the number of seditionists. Jerusalem was inundated with crowds from the mountains of Nazareth. All Judea appeared to be pouring into the devoted city. I had taken a wife--a maiden from among the Gauls--who pretended to see into futurity; she, weeping and throwing herself at my feet, said to me, "Beware, and touch not that man, for he is holy. Last night I saw him in a vision. He was walking on the waters. He was flying on the wings of the winds. He spoke to the tempest and to the fishes of the lake--all were obedient to him. Behold! the torrent of Mount Kedron flows with blood! The statues of Caesar are filled with the filth of Gemonide! The columns of the Interium have given away, and the sun is veiled in mourning, like a vestal of the tomb! O Pilate! evil awaits thee, if thou wilt not listen to the entreaties of thy wife. Dread the curse of a Roman Senate, dread the powers of Caesar."

By this time the marble stairs groaned under the weight of the multitude. The Nazarene was brought back to me. I proceeded to the Hall of Justice, followed by my guard, and asked the people in a severe tone what they demanded. "The death of the Nazarene," was their reply. "For what crime?" "He has blasphemed. He has prophesied the ruin of the temple. He calls himself the Son of God, the Messiah, the King of the Jews." "Roman justice," said I, "punishes not such offenses with death." "Crucify him, crucify him!" belched forth the relentless rabble. The vociferation of the infuriated mob shook the palace to its foundations. There was but one that appeared to be calm, in the midst of the vast multitude. It was the Nazarene.

After many fruitless attempts to protect him from this fury of his merciless persecutors, I adopted a measure which, at the moment, appeared to me to be the only one that could save his life. I ordered him to be scourged; then, calling for an ewer, I washed my hands in the presence of the multitude, thereby signifying to them my disapproval of the deed. But in vain. It was his life that those wretches thirsted for!

Often in our civil commotions have I witnessed the furious animosity of the multitude, but nothing could be compared to what I witnessed in the present instance. It might have been truly said that on this occasion all the phantoms of the infernal regions had assembled at Jerusalem. The crowd appeared not to walk: they were borne along, whirling and rolling like living waves, from the portals of the Pretorium, even unto Mount Zion, with howlings, screams, shrieks and vociferations, such as were never heard in the seditions of the Panonia, or in the tumult of the forum.

By degrees the day darkened like a winter's twilight, such as was witnessed at the death of the great Julius Caesar, which was likewise toward the Ides of March.

I, the continued governor of a rebellious province, was leaning against a column of my palace contemplating through the dreary gloom these fiends of torture dragging to execution the innocent Nazarene. All around me was deserted. Jerusalem had vomited forth her in-dwellers through the funeral gate that leads to the Gemonica. An air of desolation and sadness enveloped me. My guards had joined the cavalry, and the centurion, to display a shadow of power, was endeavoring to keep order. I was left alone, and my breaking heart admonished me that what was passing at that moment appertained rather to the history of the gods than to that of a man. A loud clamor was heard proceeding from Golgotha, which, borne on the winds, seemed to announce an agony such as had never been heard by mortal ears. Dark clouds lowered over the pinnacle of the Temple, and, settling over the city, covered it as with a veil. So dreadful were the signs that were seen, both in the

heavens and on the earth, that Dionysius, the Areopagite, is reported to have exclaimed, "Either the author of nature is suffering, or the universe is falling apart."

Towards the first hour of the night I threw my mantle around me and went down into the city towards the gates of Golgotha. The sacrifice was consummated. The crowd was returning home, still agitated, it is true, but gloomy, taciturn and desperate. What they had witnessed had stricken them with terror and remorse. I also saw my little Roman cohort pass by mournfully, the standard-bearer having veiled his eagle in token of grief, and I overheard some of the soldiers murmuring strange words which I did not understand. Others were recounting prodigies, almost similar to those which had so often smitten the Romans by the will of the gods. Sometimes groups of men and women would halt, then looking back toward Mount Calvary would remain motionless, in expectation of witnessing some new prodigy.

I returned to the Pretorium, sad and pensive. On ascending the stairs--the steps of which were still stained with the blood of the Nazarene-- I perceived an old man in a suppliant posture, and behind him several women in tears. He threw himself at my feet and wept bitterly. It is painful to see an old man weep. "Father," said I to him, mildly, "who are you, and what is your request?"

"I am Joseph of Arimathea," replied he, "and am come to beg of you, upon my knees, the permission to bury Jesus of Nazareth."

"Your prayer is granted," said I to him, and at the same ordered Manlius to take some soldiers with him to superintend the interment, lest it should be interfered with.

A few days after, the sepulchre was found empty. His disciples published all over the country that Jesus had risen from the dead, as he had foretold.

A last duty remained to be performed and that was to communicate to the Emperor these deplorable events. I did so on the night that followed the fatal catastrophe, and had just finished the communication when day began to dawn. At that moment the sound of clarions, playing the air of Diana, struck my ear. Casting my eye towards the Caesarean gate, I beheld a troop of soldiers and heard at a distance other trumpets sounding Caesar's march. It was the reinforcement that had been promised me-- two thousand chosen troops who, to hasten their arrival, had marched all night. "It has been decreed by the fates," cried I, wringing my hands "that the great iniquity should be accomplished, that for the purpose of averting the deed of *yesterday*, troops should arrive *today!* Cruel destiny, how thou sportest with the affairs of mortals!" It was but too true, what the Nazarene exclaimed while writhing on the cross: "All is consummated."

=====

Z '08, 149 – 154; R4171

WHY OUR LORD WAS CRUCIFIED

--JOHN 19:17-42.--MAY 24--

Golden Text:--"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."--1 Cor. 15:3

ONE of the most remarkable facts of history is that the most intelligent people of the world, the most highly civilized, recognize as their Leader, their Prophet, Priest and King, one whom they admit was crucified as a malefactor nearly nineteen centuries ago! Still more remarkable is the fact that the doctrines promulgated in his name by his followers lay stress upon the fact that his crucifixion was a part of the divine program; more than this, that his crucifixion was necessary; that by the blood of the cross, by the death of the crucified One, atonement is effected for the sins of the Church and of the world-- "He is the propitiation for our sins [the Church's sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (*I John 2:2.*) Indeed, by divine providence we see that the cross of Christ (not the pieces of wood, but the sacrifice made thereon and represented thereby) is the very center of the great salvation which God had prepared for our race before sin entered the world,

foreknowing that it would come. The divine sentence was death, and this rested upon Adam and all his posterity. None of the condemned could redeem himself or his brother, hence the divine provision that the Logos should leave the heavenly condition and become a man, that he might redeem man.

The death of the man Christ Jesus in any form would have been a sufficiency to offset the original sentence; but God was pleased to test our dear Redeemer's loyalty to him by arranging that the death should be a peculiarly trying one, a disgraceful one, so that the loyalty of Jesus should thereby be the more particularly demonstrated, both to angels and to men; and so that the Father could be fully justified in rewarding him with the highest exaltation--far above angels, principalities, powers and every name that is named-- that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. It was for this reason, then, that the death of the cross was intimated in the Scriptures

as being the most ignominious--"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The Apostle implies this added ignominy of the cross in his account of how the Lord left the glory which he had with the Father, humbled himself, took upon himself the form of a servant and was found in fashion a man--"And being found in fashion a man he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him." (*Phil. 2:7-10.*) So far, then, as our dear Redeemer himself was concerned, this disgrace of the cross, which would have been so trying to any noble son and particularly to the Perfect One, became to him a stepping stone to glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. As for us, it certainly has already exalted our dear Redeemer in the estimation of all truly his and guided by the Word of the Lord. These glory in the Master's faith and obedience thus demonstrated to the last degree. We are aware, however, that the Higher Critics and Evolutionists have no sympathy with any such thought. Considering themselves wise they neglect the wisdom from above, which instructs us that only by this sacrifice of himself our Redeemer presented to the Father the ransom price for father Adam's life and for the lives of all his posterity, forfeited through his disobedience; and that only by this ransom could any of these attain to a resurrection and opportunity for eternal life in harmony with God.

"THEY CONDEMNED THE JUST ONE"

Our lesson does not include the trial of our Lord by the High Priest and the Sanhedrin, nor his presentation to Pilate's court, then at Herod's and his return to Pilate and the endeavors made by that Roman governor for his release. It was only when a riot was feared that Pilate consented that Jesus should be crucified and gave the order therefor, at the same time washing his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am guiltless of the blood of this just person." It was then that the multitude cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," and Jesus was led away for crucifixion.

Jerusalem has several times been destroyed and rebuilt since then, and the levels of some of the streets are quite different from what they then were; yet the Via Dolorosa, or the "sorrowful way," is still pointed out, and also a portion of the archway known as the Arch of Ecce Homo, reputed to have been the place where Pilate stood when, pleading for our Lord's release, he said to the rabid throng, "Behold the man!"--as though he would say, Do you really wish me to crucify such a noble sample of humanity and of your race? Look at him! decide now and finally on the subject! That these traditions are well founded is shown by the fact that in quite recent times excavation made for the foundation of a house on the supposed site of Pilate's palace revealed at a considerable depth

an extensive portion of a mosaic pavement of fine work such as would have probably been connected with a palace; and this identifies itself through the statement of *John 9:13*, which refers to the judgment seat as being in a place "called the Pavement." Herewith we publish a small diagram of the city, from which can be judged the route taken by our Lord and the Roman soldiers who were to crucify him while they went to the "place of a skull" called in the Hebrew language Golgotha, and in the Latin, Calvary. The supposed site is on a hill near Jerusalem, which in the distance has the general contour of a skull, with hollows corresponding to the eye-sockets. Modern scholars are well agreed as to this site, which answers well to the general requirements of the Gospel narrative--outside the city walls, nigh to the city, in a conspicuous position, near a frequented thoroughfare, and still called by the Jews the "place of stoning." Christian tradition from the fifth century fixes this as the place of the stoning of Stephen.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?"

It was a part of the custom of these crucifixions that the culprit must bear his own cross; and so we read that Jesus bore his until, faint from the nervous strain of the preceding twenty-four hours, without sleep and probably with but little nourishment, and under great strain and exhausted from the beating, he sank under the weight of the cross. If on the one hand we think of the fact that he was perfect, we might suppose that he would have had more strength; but on the other hand we should remember that man in his perfection was not necessarily a giant in size or a Hercules in strength. Quite to the contrary; these abnormal conditions are the expressions, the results of imperfections. We may suppose that a perfect specimen of our race would combine the best qualities of mind and body represented in both the male and the female, and that delicacy, refinement and elegance with moderate strength should be nearer to our conception of perfection. Thus with fruits and vegetables; the largest fruits are frequently the coarsest; the perfect are neither over-sized and coarse-grained nor dwarfs. Our race seems to have left perfection to such a degree that the majority are either too delicate or too coarse. Furthermore, in our Lord's case we are to remember that he had been sacrificing his life for three and a half years; that vitality had been going out of him for the healing of all kinds of disease. This loss would tend to weaken him. In other words he had been dying for three and a half years and was now on his way to Calvary to finish the matter of surrendering his life in harmony with the Father's will.

Some of our Lord's disciples were onlookers (John, at least, was one), and truly they would have been glad to bear the cross for him. We must suppose that they

were hindered from proffering their services by fear of being considered as interfering with the officers of the law. However, in the emergency the soldiers found a countryman on the route whom they compelled to bear the cross after Jesus. This expression might have meant to walk after him, to relieve him of part of the load; or it might have meant for him to carry all the load while the Lord walked on before. But we do know that this enforced task upon Simon was a very precious privilege. How many of the Lord's followers since have almost envied him the opportunity enjoyed! Tradition says that Simon ultimately became a Christian, that his name was known to the Apostle John and also the part of the country whence he came. The mention of the names of his sons gives strong corroboration to the tradition.--**Mark 15:21.**

While sympathizing with our Lord and thinking how we should have enjoyed helping to bear his cross, we should not forget in this connection two privileges which he has provided for us. First, he tells us that if we would come after him as his disciples we may share with him in the bearing of the cross of this present time--"Whosoever will be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow me." Then, after believing on the Lord, and being justified by faith, and having peace with God, and realizing the forgiveness of our sins, we are invited to make a full consecration of ourselves, to take up our cross--to cross our own wills and to do the will of the Lord, which is the will of the Father which sent him. Do we appreciate the privilege enough thus to take up our cross daily? Are we still bearing the cross? Is it our resolution that by the Lord's grace we will continue to bear it to the end of the journey, until like him we shall be able to say, "It is finished"--the work given us to do, the privilege of bearing witness to the Word of truth by word and by daily conduct?

The second way of crossbearing is to help others who, as members of the Body of Christ, are his representatives about us in the world. When we see any of these with crosses too heavy for them to bear, crosses under which they will likely sink or have already sunk, let us think of the Master and of how we coveted the privilege of helping him to bear his burdens, and let us hear his voice assuring us that what is done unto one of the least of his disciples in his name is done unto him. Oh, how many helpful words this would mean to many of the burdened and the weak of the Lord's Little Flock! Oh, how many cups of kindness it would imply! How much it would bring of cheer and comfort to some of those whom the Lord recognizes as members of his Body! As one member of our body assists another member in distress, so in the Body of Christ. All the members are to bear one another up, strengthen one another, comfort one another, refresh one another, and generally to make

one another ready for the glorious consummation of our hopes in the Kingdom.

A LOOK AT THE CRUCIFIED ONE

Numerous details connected with the crucifixion are enumerated. The time was the third hour, nine o'clock, according to Mark, but the sixth hour or noon according to John. The discrepancy is accounted for by the oriental lack of exactness; or Mark may have referred to the fact that the sentence was pronounced in the third hour, while John's record has to do with the time when our Lord was actually on the cross-- after the slow journey, the fastening to the cross, and the making out and attaching the board indicating the charge against our Lord, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," and then the subsequent raising of the cross with Jesus on it, all of which would occupy quite a considerable period of time, probably nearly or quite three hours.

The Jewish leaders were disappointed with the placard which appeared on the cross, indicating the crime for which the culprit had been executed. They protested about it, denying that Jesus was the King of the Jews. But the Governor refused to alter the matter; and doubtless he worded it especially as a rebuke to them, for he perceived that for envy, malice, they had delivered Jesus to him for death. He would now shame them. The multitudes could all read the inscription: for according to custom it was written in three languages, in Hebrew, the language of the people; in Latin, the language of the government, and in Greek, the language of the educated of that time. Thus in spite of his enemies, the crucified Jesus was proclaimed the Messiah. Yet how strange! A crucified Messiah! How different are God's ways and means of accomplishing an object from man's ways! Truly, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways. Had Jesus not died, had he not redeemed us from sin, the most that he could have done as a ransom would have been to assist man to more reasonable and better lives--but not to eternal life, which had been forfeited through Adam and which could not be recovered except through a redemption. Under the divine plan, however, he who humbled himself to redeem the world is now highly exalted by the Father to his own right hand of power and dignity, and shortly, as the King of Israel and the King of all the world, he will reveal himself to the overthrow of wickedness, to the uplifting of righteousness, and to the assistance of the weak and the poor and the ignorant, for the blessing of all the families of the earth according to the promise.--**Gen. 12:3.**

Our Lord was made a companion of robbers. The two crucified with him, one at either side, were probably members of the band of Barabbas, and were probably considered by the people as more or less of

heroes. At all events we are not informed that any jests or jibes were hurled at them by the people. Thus it must be with the Lord's followers to this day. We must remember that our Master and his cause are unpopular; that the learned and influential of the world will be opposed to us, as they were to him, and that this is according to his Word and to the principle upon which the divine plan is being worked out, namely, that if we would reign with him, we must also suffer with him. Crucifixion particulars are not given, and we may be glad of it, for the picture which suggests itself to the mind is horrible enough without any incidental details, and the fact that four writers recorded the main features of the execution, but gave none of the details of the crucifixion itself, is in full accord with the general treatment of such matters in the Bible so different from what would ordinarily be the course of a narrator. Ian MacLaren suggests:--

"There was no death so cruel as that of crucifixion, because the prisoner died not from loss of blood nor in a short space of time, but through the lingering agony of open wounds, the arrested circulation at the extremities, the tension of the nervous system, and the oppression of heart and brain. For five long hours Jesus endured this pain of torn nerves, of intense thirst and of racked body and throbbing brain!"

SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS

It is not to be expected that anyone under such conditions would have much to say. It is quite probable, therefore, that the recorded words or messages of our Lord were the only ones he uttered. These words represent faithfully some of the most important features of our Lord's character and teaching.

What is generally known as the first of these words from the cross is recorded in *Luke 23:34*. Then said Jesus, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." We have no doubt at all that our Lord's heart was full of a forgiving spirit, but for several reasons we doubt if he ever uttered these words: (1) They are not found in the Greek MSS., *Codex Vaticanus*, No. 1209 (fourth century), and *Codex Alexandrinus* (fifth century). (2) These words would not seem to be appropriate, for those who were guilty of our Lord's death were not repentant, and our understanding is that the Scriptures clearly indicate that repentance is necessary to forgiveness. (3) Those who were guilty of our Lord's death did not believe on him nor trust in his merit, and the clear teaching of the Scriptures is that forgiveness must be preceded by faith. (4) It is not recorded that they were of repentant and contrite hearts and that they had turned away from sin; and the clear teaching of the Scripture is that no one is forgiven unless in this attitude of repentance. (5) Our Lord had not yet finished the work of sacrifice, nor

had he yet ascended to the Father and presented that sacrifice even on behalf of believers, and hence the Father would not be prepared to forgive the sin. (6) We have no evidence that the sin was forgiven, but every evidence that the prayer of the Jews themselves, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," was answered in the time of trouble which came upon that nation, of which the Apostle says, "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."--*I Thess. 2:16*.

The reputed second word from the cross, "Verily I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise,"* is apparently authentic. It was the Lord's message to one of the robbers who confessed his sin and desired the Lord's favor and clemency when he would come into his Kingdom. Our Lord has not yet fully come into his Kingdom; hence the time has not yet come when the thief desired to be remembered. Notwithstanding the dark day and the apparent eclipse of our Lord's life and hopes, he assured the penitent one that he was able to answer his petition and would do so. The fulfilment of that request, as the Scriptures show, will come at our Lord's second advent, when he shall take his great power and reestablish Paradise in the earth, the Paradise which was lost on account of sin, but which was redeemed by the precious blood. Then the penitent thief will come forth; yea, the Scriptures tell us that all that are in their graves

"BEHOLD THY SON!" "BEHOLD THY MOTHER!"

Mary, our Lord's mother, and John, his beloved disciple, evidently were standing not far from the cross, doubtless weeping and surely sorrowing. But our Lord, so far from thinking of himself and his own anguish, was thinking of others. As during his ministry he had gone about doing good, so in his dying hour here he thought of the good, the welfare of others, and in the above words committed his mother to the care of the loving disciple. Beautiful is the lesson! How it shows us the largeness of our Lord's heart and sympathy, and how it teaches us not to be entirely engrossed with our own trials and difficulties, large and small, but rather to be burden-bearers of others, allowing our sympathies, our thoughts and our plans to be active for the blessing of all those who in any measure are under our care in matters temporal or spiritual!

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

These words are known as the fourth word or message from the cross. They mark to us the depth of our Lord's anguish. He was dying as the sinner's redemption price, as the substitute, in order that God might be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus, and that he might grant them in due time a resurrection from the dead and a return to the Father's

favor and to eternal life--to all that was lost in Adam. To be our substitute he must in everything suffer all that we were doomed to suffer as sinners. This included not only his loss of life, but also his cutting off from all fellowship with the Father. A moment, as it were, would do; but there must come that moment of darkness, of separation, and we may readily understand that this was the darkest moment in all of our Lord's experiences, still darker than Gethsemane, which was merely a foreshadowing of this experience. How glad we are that we can see the philosophy, the reason why this experience came to our Lord! And as we realize this, may it more and more fill our hearts with appreciation of the blessings which are ours through Christ; the privilege of return to the Father's fellowship and love, so that we can apply to ourselves the Master's words, "The Father himself loveth you." (*John 16:27*.) There is nothing in this dying word of our Lord that would suggest insincerity on his part, and surely nothing in it that would suggest the doctrine of the Trinity! It is in perfect keeping, however, with all that he said on the subject of his relationship to the Father.

The fifth word: "I thirst." This expression calls forcibly to mind several facts: (1) Exposed to the heat of the sun, with but slight covering and under nervous excitement and pain, thirst must have been one of the principal elements of torture to the crucified. (2) When we think of the fact that our Lord had been the active agent of Jehovah in the great work of creation of all things, including water, the Master's voluntary humiliation and resignation to thirst--yea, to die on behalf of the rebels of the realm--is a remarkable illustration of his love for mankind. This cry of thirst, we are told, was uttered when he knew that all things had been finished, when all of the work which had been given him to do had been accomplished--and not until then might he refer to his own condition. Even this cry was in fulfilment of the prediction of *Psalms 69:21*. Our Lord had refused the stupefying draught, but now accepted the refreshment given him from a sponge lifted to his lips on a reed, probably two and one-third feet long. As we think of this matter let us remember that our Lord hungered and thirsted that we, with all for whom he died, might have the water of life and the bread of life--might attain eternal life!

*Note corrected punctuation. See DAWN-STUDIES, Vol. VI., p.667

shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth; and this call will include the other thief also. They will come forth to the favorable

conditions of the Millennial Kingdom; but we may be sure that the penitent one will have an advantage over the other and a special reward, too, for ministering a word of comfort to our Redeemer in his dying hour.

"IT IS FINISHED"

This sixth word 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."

"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.

BROKEN-HEARTED LITERALLY

St. Luke informs us that he cried with a loud voice, a testimony and witness to all that were near of his hope in God and in a resurrection. Some modern writers regard the cry as the utterance of one dying of a ruptured heart, the supposition being that this was the immediate cause of our Lord's death. It is admitted that there is such a thing as an actually broken heart. We might attribute the cause of this rupture to the ignominious circumstances surrounding our Lord's betrayal, denial, condemnation, scourging and crucifixion; and no doubt all of these would tend to

depress him in spirit. But in our judgment the primary cause of his heart rupture was the grief mentioned in the fourth cry, the withdrawal of divine fellowship, the loneliness which was his during his last hour.

The technical explanation of the reasons for supposing that our Lord died of a heart rupture is thus stated:--

"The bloody water that burst from Christ's side when pierced by the soldier's spear evidenced this. The blood exuding from the heart into the pericardium had separated into red clots and a water serum. Jesus died literally from a broken heart."

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 Arimathea 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 Arimathea 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 footstep follower in the fullest sense? Geike remarks respecting him:--

"It was no light matter Joseph had undertaken: for to take part in a burial at any time would defile him for seven days and make everything unclean which he touched (*Num. 19:11*); and to do so now involved a seclusion through the whole Passover week with all its holy observances and rejoicings."

How Joseph's natural, hewn tomb was honored by the Master's burial therein!

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. We may be sure that those who are so fearful as to hold back when opportunities are offered for service to the Lord are unlikely to be approved of the Master and unlikely, therefore, to gain the great reward which he is now offering to victors. 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. Indeed, the more our courage and faithfulness to privilege and opportunity may cost us, the greater will be our reward, both in the present life and in that which is to come. This is the third mention we have of Nicodemus in connection with our Lord's ministry. First he visited Jesus by night, as recorded in *John 3*. Second, he cautiously interposed on Jesus' behalf when an attempt was made to seize the Lord, as recorded in *John 7:44-52*. And now, as some one suggests, he "improved a last opportunity for service with the bitter consolation of having failed where he might have done much." He was a rich man and brought an hundred Roman pounds (67 lbs. our weight) of myrrh, resin and pounded aloewood, aromatic and preservative, supposedly used by the Jews in wrapping up the dead. A lesson for us is that 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. We should bring our flowers to cheer and comfort in life and not wait until death has prevented an appreciation of these.

Newman Hall suggests:--

"Golgotha! There is a legend that it was the very center of the earth's surface, the middle point of the habitable globe. We think nothing of the legend, but very much of the truth which it suggests, for the cross of Christ is the true center of the Church where all believers meet, of all tribes and nations."

Another says:--

"How shall we dare, with the cross in our view, to lay out our lives for self-blessing and self-indulgence? How shall we make the possession of this world's honors, its wealth, or its favor or its high places, the main end and scope of our lives? taking no part in the sufferings of Christ, choosing ever the feast and never the fast?"

Phillips Brooks wrote:--

"You have your cross, my friend. There is pain in the duty which you do. But if in all your pain you know that God's love is becoming a dearer and a plainer truth to you, then you can triumph in every sacrifice. Your cross has won something of the glory and beauty of your Lord's. Rejoice and be glad, for you are crucified with Christ."

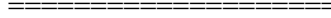
OUR GOLDEN TEXT

In closing this lesson let us remember the important truths of its Golden Text, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." He did not die because death was natural, because he was sinful like other men, nor to show us how to die; he died for our sins, because of our sins; because the penalty of our sins was a death penalty, and because we must be

redeemed in order to have any future life on any plane.

Hence:--

"In the cross of Christ we glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."



Chapter 9 – The Day of the Resurrection

Matthew 28:1-20

28:1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first [day] of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

28:2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

28:3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

28:4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead [men].

28:5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

28:6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

28:7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

28:8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

28:9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

28:10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

28:11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

28:12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

28:13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him [away] while we slept.

28:14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

28:15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

28:17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

28:19 Go ye [[therefore,]] and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

IMPORTANCE OF JESUS' RESURRECTION.

--MATT. 28:1-15.--JUNE 19.--

Golden Text: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."--I Cor. 15:20

FEW seem to realize the importance of our Lord's resurrection --its bearing upon the entire Gospel message. The Apostle indicates how much depended upon it when he wrote, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.... They also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (*I Cor. 15:14,18.*) The numbers of the Lord's professed followers, clergy and laity, who fail to appreciate the resurrection --who really do not believe in it--is very large. The number who really do believe in it is very small. The majority, under the teachings which have come down to us from the dark ages, fail entirely to realize that death means a cessation of life, and, as the Scriptures declare, "In that very day their thoughts perish." On the contrary, the masses of Christendom have come to believe that there is no death, that the dead are more alive than they ever were before they died. Applying this thought to our Lord, as well as to others, they do not appreciate the Scriptural declaration that "Christ died for our sins and rose again on the third day." They think of him as being alive during that time, and that it was merely his fleshly body that was inanimate in the tomb, and that the resurrection which occurred on the third day was not his resurrection to life, but merely the reanimation of his dead body.

ERROR LEADS TO CONFUSION.

Confused thus by the errors of medieval times, which were adopted by the reformers and are engrafted upon the minds of the civilized world today, the majority of Christian people cannot appreciate the Scriptural declarations respecting the importance of the resurrection of our Lord. Instead of believing the Apostle we have just quoted, to the effect that our faith is vain, our preaching vain, if Jesus did not rise from the dead, the majority of Christendom would be inclined to say just the reverse of this: "What difference would it make to our dead loved ones, what difference would it make to our preaching, what difference would it make to our faith, if Jesus' *body* had been left in the tomb?" Hence, only those who realize that the dead are dead--that they can have no conscious existence until awakened from the sleep of death-- can really appreciate the importance of the resurrection.

If Jesus had not been raised up from the dead, we have no basis for the preaching of the Gospel--for the Gospel message is that, by the grace of God, Jesus' death was the ransom price for father Adam and his posterity, and that because Jesus has thus paid the penalty for the whole race and redeemed all from the sentence of death by his own death, therefore, in due time, in God's appointed time, Adam and all of his posterity are to be released from the death sentence, and Christ as the great King is to establish his Kingdom in the world, and through it lift from mankind the burden, the penalty of death, and that then all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth to the glorious opportunities of the Millennial Kingdom--opportunities for reconciliation with God, and release from all the imperfections of the fall. To preach such a Gospel, with the fact before us that Jesus had died and without any proof of his resurrection, would be vain preaching, foolish preaching, deceiving the people. To believe such a Gospel, under such circumstances, would be to brand ourselves as foolish simpletons; and to have any hope that our dead friends could ever be benefited by a dead Christ would be absurd.

Seeing, then, the importance of the Lord's resurrection, and how every feature of the Gospel is dependent upon this great fact, we understand why it was that the apostles, preaching forgiveness of sins and a future blessing, based everything upon the fact that Jesus not only died for our sins as our ransom price, but that he rose again for our justification, for our deliverance from the sentence, the guilt, the penalty, that is upon us as a human family--the death penalty. No wonder, then, that our heavenly Father arranged that we should have so explicit an account, so detailed a statement of everything pertaining to our Lord's resurrection; no wonder that the evangelists recorded matters with such minuteness, no wonder that in all the preaching of the apostles this great fundamental truth, which was the basis of their own faith toward God, was set before the Church as being all important. From this standpoint the present lesson must be of deep interest to all of the Lord's people for all time--until the outward manifestations of the Kingdom shall attest the things which the household of faith must now accept by faith built upon this testimony.

HE AROSE ON THE THIRD DAY.

We concur with the generally accepted--and, we believe, well-attested--view, that our Lord's crucifixion on the 14th of Nisan, Jewish time, corresponded to the sixth day of the week, which we now call Friday. According to the records, our Lord died at three o'clock in the afternoon. Calvary was but a short distance from the gate of Jerusalem, the Temple and Pilate's residence. Hence, Nicodemus and Joseph, members of the Sanhedrin, evidently friendly to Jesus, but not sufficiently convinced of the truthfulness of his claims, or else not sufficiently courageous to lay down their lives with him, had not far to go after noting his death to secure consent for his burial; and the tomb in which it is supposed he was buried is within a stone's throw of the supposed location of the cross. It has been presumed, therefore, that our Lord was buried about four o'clock on the afternoon of that day, corresponding to our Friday. The next day, which we call Saturday, and which the Jews called the seventh day or Sabbath, began--Jewish time--Friday evening at sundown and ended on what we call Saturday at sundown, and our Lord's resurrection took place early in the morning of the first day of the week, which we now designate Sunday.

Thus our Lord arose from the dead on the "third day." He was in death from three o'clock until six on Friday, all of the night following, all of the next day, Saturday, all of the next night, which, according to Jewish reckoning, was the forepart of the first day of the week. This would not make three days and three nights full, complete--seventy-two hours--but we believe it did constitute what the Lord meant when he declared that he would rise from the dead on the third day. Some, desirous of counting full three days and three nights, have been led to claim that our Lord was crucified on Thursday; but neither would this make three days and three nights--seventy-two hours. In order to have three full days and three full nights we would be obliged to suppose that the Lord was crucified on Wednesday. But all the testimony is against such a supposition and the weight of it decidedly in favor of Friday, and the counting of a part each of three days and nights as being what our Lord referred to. But if any one have a different view from ours on this subject, we will not contend with him: it is a trifling matter, of no importance whatever. Nothing was dependent upon the length of time our Lord would be dead. The important items were that he should actually die, that he should be dead long enough for it to be positively known that he was dead, and that he should rise from the dead.

DESTROYING THE TEMPLE AND RAISING IT UP.

When our Lord spoke in advance, saying, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up"--"he spake of the Temple of his body." (*John 2:21*.) But of which body did he speak--of the flesh?--of the body which he took in order that he might be the sacrifice for sin, of the body which he consecrated to death? Was it that body that he meant would be raised on the third day? We answer that that body was not his temple, but merely his tabernacle. Our Lord's resurrection body was not the one which the Jews destroyed, but a spiritual body which they had never seen, but which was revealed to the Apostle Paul as "one born out of due time" when, on his way to Damascus, Jesus appeared unto him "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday."

It is much more reasonable to suppose that our Lord spoke of his body which is the Church and of which he was and is the Head. The Jews destroyed the Head, and all down through the Gospel age the various members of the body of Christ have been called upon "to suffer with him," "to be dead with him," "to lay down their lives for the brethren." The body has been in process of destruction from Jesus' day until now, and very soon, we believe, the last member will have proven himself "faithful unto death." Now, let us see how the Lord will raise up this Temple of which he was the great foundation stone, and of which the Apostle Peter declares, each of his faithful disciples is a living stone. (*I Pet. 2:4*) Considering the time from the Lord's standpoint--"A day with the Lord is as a thousand years"--our Lord died in the year of the world 4161--after four days had passed and the fifth day had begun.

The destruction of the Temple of God, which is the Church, began there in the destruction of the chief corner stone and has progressed since--during the remainder of the fifth day, all of the sixth day, and we are now in the beginning of the seventh day--"very early in the morning." And the promise of the Lord is that the Lord's resurrection shall be completed about this time--"The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (*Psa. 46:5*.) Thus we view the matter, that the Lord was a part of the three days dead and rose on the *third* day, early in the morning, and that likewise the First Resurrection will be completed-- the entire body of Christ will be raised on the third day, early in the morning.

Evidently the matter of the resurrection was beyond the mental grasp of the apostles themselves at the time it occurred. Jesus had foretold that he would rise again on the third day, but they had not comprehended the meaning of his words: None of them for a moment thought of his resurrection, but merely of what they could do in the way of embalming his body, and

showing to it, as his remains, the same sympathy and love which they would have shown to the remains of any dear friend or brother or sister. Thus it was that being hindered from coming to the sepulcher on the Sabbath day by the Jewish Law, which forbade labor of any kind on that day, the Lord's friends began to gather at the sepulcher, probably by previous appointment, about daybreak, after the Sabbath, --on the first day of the week. There were a number from Galilee, and probably they were lodged with other friends in different parts of the city, and possibly with some at Bethany; hence they went by different routes. The accounts vary, and are yet in perfect accord and all true. They are told from the different standpoints of each writer, and are all the more conclusive to us as evidences in that they show that there was no collusion between the writers of the Gospels--no endeavor to state the matters in exactly the same terms, as there surely would have been had the account been a manufactured one, a concocted story.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE TRUTH ARE WEAK.

Before the arrival of any of the disciples, while the Roman guard was still on duty at the tomb, an angel of the Lord appeared on the scene and a shock like that of an earthquake was experienced, and the guard, or "watch," became as dead men--almost swooned or fainted--but, recovering, hastened from the spot to make their report to the chief priests, at whose instance they had been appointed to this service. The chief priests induced them to circulate the report that the body had been stolen by his disciples while they slept, and this report was evidently current for quite a time subsequently, as we read, "the saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day"--up to the date of writing Matthew's Gospel, which is supposed to have been written some nine years after the event. Like all arguments against the truth, it was a weak one, but the best they could do. How foolish would be the testimony of men who would say what took place while they were asleep! A bribe was given to the guard as the price of this false statement, and they had the assurance of protection, security against the ordinary penalty for a Roman soldier sleeping while on duty; but then they were not on duty for the Roman government; they were merely a complimentary guard furnished in the interests of the priests and at their solicitation.

Meantime, while the guard was on its way to the priests to report matters, the Lord's friends began to gather, with their love and spices, etc. The women of the company arrived first, and in so doing attested for all time the love and sympathy of their hearts, and honored, yea glorified, their sex in so doing. The three

mentioned in our lesson have since had noble mention by the poets of all nations. One has written:--

"Three women crept at break of day,
Agrope along the shadowy way,
Where Joseph's tomb and garden lay.

"Each in her throbbing bosom bore
A burden of such fragrant store
As never there had lain before.

"Myrrh-bearers still, at home, abroad--
What paths have holy women trod,
Burdened with votive gifts to God!

"Rare gifts whose chiefest worth was priced
By this one thought, that all sufficed:
Their spices had been bruised for Christ."

During the forty days which began that morning, and which ended with our Lord's ascension, he appeared at most eleven times, sometimes to one and sometimes to another, and on one occasion to above five hundred brethren at once. It is quite probable that instead of eleven times there were only seven, and that the other four records were merely differences of description of four of the seven manifestations.

"HE SHOWED HIMSELF BY INFALLIBLE PROOFS."

Our Lord's first appearance was to Mary Magdalene, she out of whom he had cast seven demons and who, from thenceforth, became one of our Lord's most earnest followers. She had much forgiven her; she loved much, and her love had brought her early to the sepulcher. Apparently, Mary Magdalene was the first of the women to arrive at the sepulcher, and immediately on finding that Jesus was not in the tomb, she hastened to announce the fact to John and Peter. Returning to the sepulcher, later she apparently reached it after the other women had been there and had gone their way, and it was while she was still near the tomb that Jesus appeared to her first of all, as described by *John--20:11-18*.

Subsequently the Lord met the other women as they were en route to make known the news to the household of faith. He addressed them, "All hail!" which in the Greek was the usual salutation, practically signifying, Rejoice! They fell before him, worshipping him and grasping him by the feet, and appeared afraid that anything henceforth should separate them from him. Our Lord, however, reminded them of their duty toward the brethren --that they should spread the good tidings of his resurrection. The same lesson comes to us, that after we have found the Lord, have come to realize the Truth, we have a great privilege in being permitted to serve it, and a great

duty toward the brethren who as yet know not what has caused our hearts to rejoice. We are not to assume that we are to merely hug the Truth to our own hearts, but are to remember that it is also for others, and to take pleasure in dispensing it to them. He who thus serves the Lord and the household of faith is sure to have the greater blessing in the end.

Our Lord's message was to tell the disciples that he would meet them again in Galilee. Thus it was that, after five or six appearances in the vicinity of Jerusalem, our Lord abstained from further appearing to his followers, and they returned to their home country, Galilee, where he met them, as he had engaged to do. We must remember that the most of our Lord's ministry was spent in Galilee and that the majority of the believers were Galileans. It was to be expected that all of the household of faith should have some opportunity for witnessing to our Lord's resurrection, and so the Apostle Paul tells us that in one of these later manifestations in Galilee, "Our Lord was seen by above five hundred brethren at one time; of whom the greater part remain unto this present [the time the Apostle was writing], though some are fallen asleep."--*I Cor. 15:6*.

It is necessary that we should note carefully the two objects our Lord had in view in the various manifestations he gave his followers of the fact that he had risen from the dead. The first of these was a demonstration that he was no longer confined to earthly conditions, as they had known him to be during the previous years of acquaintance, but was now, like all spirit beings, able to go and come like the wind--invisibly, secretly. Like all spirit beings he was now glorious. The Apostle explains the resurrection of the overcomers of the Church in *I Cor. 15:51,52*, and the Scriptural assurance is that in our resurrection we shall be like the Lord, see him as he is and share his glory. The Scriptures also assure us that our resurrection is really a part of his resurrection, a part of the First Resurrection,--that Jesus the Head of the glorious Christ was raised from the power of death, was glorified on the third day after his death, and that early in the morning of the new dispensation the Church will come forth from death in his likeness, sharers in his resurrection. --*Phil. 3:10*.

OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION CHANGE.

This being true, we know that the time when our Lord received his spirit body was at his resurrection and not subsequently; as the Apostle declares, "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] in spirit." Speaking of our Lord's humiliation and his subsequent exaltation at his resurrection, the Apostle assures us that our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father and humbled himself to become a man, and that in due time he humbled himself unto death,

even the death of the cross--"wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name." The exaltation came to him in his resurrection change. It was true of him then, as it will be true of all the members of his body in due time, that he was sown in weakness, raised in power, sown a natural [animal, human] body, raised a spiritual body.

This spiritual body of our Lord was just as glorious in the moment of his resurrection as it was at any time afterward or is now. It had all the powers properly granted to spirit beings in harmony with the Lord. He was not, as previously, merely the man Christ Jesus, but was now the Lord of glory. As such he was able to associate himself with his disciples, either visibly or invisibly, or to appear as a flame of fire in the burning bush, or as a wayfaring man, as he appeared with others to Abraham, or in any manner he might see fit. He was the same glorious being who subsequently appeared to Saul of Tarsus, shining as the lightning, much as the angel appeared when the Roman guard was overcome and fled.

Some, then, may inquire, Why did he not appear to the women and apostles in the same glorious manner, with shining features? We answer that to have so done would have been to hinder the very object he had in view. How could his followers, who were not then begotten of the holy Spirit and consequently were unable to understand spiritual things (*I Cor. 2:14*)--how could they have understood that a being shining like an angel was the Lord Jesus they had seen crucified three days before? And even if they could have associated the two in some manner, what evidence would there have been for others since? The removal of the remains of our Lord Jesus from the tomb was an essential to the faith of the disciples of that day, and of all who would believe on him since through their word, and manifestations of his being alive from the dead were necessary also to all these. The instructions which our Lord gave, and his expositions of the prophecies, and his application of these to himself, given at that particular time, were necessary as a firm foundation for faith. None of these objects could have been so well served in any other manner as the manner in which they were performed. Our Lord's first appearance to Mary was as a gardener. She recognized him not; neither his clothing nor his features were the same as those she had previously seen, as those she had previously recognized. His clothing was divided amongst the Roman soldiers, his grave clothes were still in the tomb, the body which she saw was a special body and the clothing which he wore was special clothing prepared and used for this special occasion. She knew not her Lord until he adopted a tone of voice which she recognized.

It was the same with the two on the way to Emmaus, later on the same day. Jesus walked with them, but

they knew him not; his clothing was different, his features were different, they saw no prints of nails in his hands or in his feet. They asked him, "Art thou a stranger in these parts?" He improved the opportunity for discussing with them calmly, deliberately, carefully, the prophecies relating to himself, expounding these to them so forcefully, so clearly, that their hearts burned within them as they thought of the possibility that the story which they had heard from the women might have been really true--that Jesus was to rise from the dead. Our Lord did not reveal his identity until he was ready to vanish from their sight. When he vanished, his flesh and his clothing vanished, too. The same evening he appeared to the company in the upper room at Jerusalem, the doors being shut. They were doubtless talking about the events of the day and of the preceding day, when, suddenly, Jesus appeared in their midst. He materialized--that is to say, he, a spirit being, came into their midst and there assumed flesh, bone, a complete body clothed. Does some one ask, How could he do this? We cannot answer, but whoever can understand the miracle of the change of the water into wine can as easily understand our Lord's appearance in the upper room, the doors being shut; and how, after the interview, he just as mysteriously vanished from their sight, flesh, bone, clothing, all--the doors still being shut and doubtless carefully barred for fear of the Jews, in anticipation that the hatred which had pursued the Lord to death would fasten itself upon his followers.

BE NOT FAITHLESS, BUT BELIEVING.

A later appearance was in the same upper room probably a week later--again on the first day of the week. Thomas was present: he had been absent on the previous occasion and he could not believe the testimony of the others. Thomas had expressed his doubts most forcefully and had insisted that the others were too easily convinced, but he was satisfied finally when Jesus, appearing to him with the others, requested him to put his finger in the prints of the nails. Did Thomas really see and put his finger into the nail prints of that body of our Lord which three days before had hung upon the cross. We answer No; that body of flesh and bones could not have come through the door while it was shut. The body which appeared in the upper room was a materialization--actual flesh and actual bones as our Lord said to them, "Handle me: a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." What they saw was not the spirit body, what they saw was the actual flesh and bones. He, the spirit being, was hidden from their sight; he assumed this body of flesh and bones in their midst--created it there and created the clothing also.

Whoever disputes the power of the Lord to create flesh and bones has an equal difficulty in accounting

for the clothing; for who will say that it would be more difficult to create the body than to create the clothing inside that room, the doors being shut? Who will say that it would be easier to make clothing vanish into thin air than to make flesh and bones vanish into thin air? The power to do these things is not natural to us, nor can we fully comprehend the matter. Now we see through a glass obscurely, by and by we shall understand how our Lord can do the wonderful things that he is continually doing. For do we not see miracles all about us in nature, in the transpirings of every day? The kernel of wheat--how is it possible that out of that little grain should come a stem, a sprout, a stock and a head full of grain? It is a miracle -- something wholly beyond our power to accomplish and beyond our power to even understand. We could make a grain of wheat, we could combine the various elements necessary to it, and could shape them as a grain of wheat is shaped; but our grain, while analyzing the same as that which nature would put forth, would not send out shoots, would have no stock, would bear no grain.

"HIS FLESH SAW NOT CORRUPTION."

It is not for us to say what became of the natural body of Jesus--the one that was pierced. God has not revealed particulars respecting it, except that it did not corrupt. Where then is it? We know not; but he who hid the body of Moses so that none could find it, was likewise able to hide the body of Jesus. (*Deut. 34:5,6.*) Who can tell but that the uncorrupted body of Jesus is yet to be produced by the Lord as an evidence or testimony of the truth of this whole transaction for the world in all future time. We do remember that the manna with which Israel was fed was wont to corrupt on the second day, except on the Sabbath; but we remember also that a golden pot of this manna was preserved in the Ark incorruptible, as a witness or memorial of the great miracle of the desert. What shall we say, then, respecting this bread which came down from heaven, which is also likened to manna? Is not the Lord equally able to preserve the body of Jesus as a witness, and, although other bodies of flesh are wont to corrupt, may not this one be preserved incorruptible? There is a certain statement in the Scriptures which seems to imply that this same body, spear-marked and nail-marked, is somewhere kept for future exhibit--as it is written, "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced."--*Zech. 12:10.*

The first five of the Lord's appearances apparently took place during the first eight of the forty days' presence. Thus there was a long wait in which there was no manifestation, and the apostles had abundance of time to think over and discuss the situation. As the majority of them were from Galilee, they probably did not remain in vicinity of Jerusalem more than two weeks after our Lord's last appearance on the eighth

day, but betook themselves to their homes, wondering whether or not they would ever see the Master again, whether or not he might appear to them again on their homeward journey or in some other upper room when assembling in Galilee. Perhaps, too, they remembered the message sent to them by the women, that he would go before them into Galilee and meet them there.

A little longer waiting in the vicinity of the old haunts, visited frequently by our Lord and themselves, and the practical affairs of life began to press upon them. Simon Peter was the first to declare his intention of re-entering the fishing business, and others of the apostles, accustomed to the same craft formerly, joined him, and practically the old partnership arrangement was revived as it existed two years or so before, when Jesus called them to apostleship. This was the very condition of things which our Lord foresaw, and we believe that his tarrying forty days after his resurrection before he ascended was in great measure for the purpose of giving the very lessons which now were called forth. He knew just how discouraged they would feel; that all the hopes and prospects of the Kingdom, as they had previously viewed it, would seem vague and indistinct under the new conditions, and how his followers would not be prepared to go out in the work he intended without further instruction. He was present with them, but invisible, a spirit being, during all these weeks; he heard and noted their queries and explanations, suggestions and conclusions, and was ready to apply the proper lessons at the proper moment.

"LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE?"

The Lord permitted the partnership in the fishing business to progress and a fresh start to be made. They toiled all that night and caught nothing, and doubtless were still further discouraged, concluding that failure was attending them in temporal matters as well as in spiritual. The opportune moment had come, and Jesus--standing on the shore in another form, in a body of flesh and with clothing, though not his own flesh and not his usual clothing, but specially prepared flesh and clothing--called to the apostles inquiring if they had fish; they shouted back that they had been toiling all night and had found nothing. He suggested the casting of the net on the other side of the boat, although it must have seemed to them foolish, because it would be but a few feet away from where it had already been, and indeed the boat itself was continually turning. Nevertheless something about the stranger on the shore impressed them and they did cast their net on the other side, and immediately the net was filled with great fish. So far as Peter was concerned the lesson was learned already. He remembered a very similar experience they had had at the time the Lord called them to apostleship, and quickly he perceived that the

one on shore was the Lord--in another manifestation. Without waiting for the boats, the net or the fish, Peter sprang into the water and swam ashore in his anxiety to be soon with the Lord, and in his realization that this manifestation like the others might terminate suddenly. Besides, Peter was anxious to manifest his love and faithfulness, remembering how not a great while before he had denied his Lord.

It was in connection with this manifestation that Jesus specially directed his words to Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"--these boats, nets, etc. The question addressed to Peter was applicable to all, but of special weight and force to Peter as the elder and leader of all, and the one who had particularly said but a short time previously, "Though all forsake thee, yet will not I." Peter declared his love for the Lord, and was told to feed the sheep and to feed the lambs. The lesson was a timely one and never needed to be repeated. Peter and the other apostles, so far as we know, never subsequently doubted the importance of their mission as apostles, but gave their entire time and energy to the feeding of the sheep and lambs. The miracle witnessed convinced them of the Lord's power either to bless or hinder them in temporal matters, and that equally he will provide for their every interest as his apostles and representatives. The lesson was given at exactly the right moment. Had it been given earlier in their experience it doubtless would have had much less weight: it was the part of wisdom to permit them to become perplexed and to decide on the fishing business, and then on the very first day of their experience to give them this forceful lesson. It was a lesson respecting the resurrection of our Lord and also demonstrated the fact of his change, that he was no longer the man Christ Jesus, no longer subject to human conditions. Again he vanished out of their sight, but made an appointment for the meeting of all at a certain place.

This meeting by appointment was doubtless the one mentioned by the Apostle Paul--the one in which about five hundred brethren witnessed a materialization and manifestation of the Lord. We know not the full tenor of the various lessons taught, but incline to think that the lessons were more of the practical kind than in words--that these manifestations were for the purpose of convincing them of the Lord's resurrection and of his change from earthly to spiritual conditions.

HE THAT DESCENDED IS THE SAME THAT ASCENDED.

The next appearance probably was the one on the Mount of Olives at the time of our Lord's ascension. Apparently all of the apostles and perhaps others returned to Jerusalem and to the Mount of Olives, their

instruction being to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. It was while they were present with him receiving final instructions that he was parted from them; the form that they beheld gradually receding into the clouds was received out of their sight. In this arrangement the Lord did the best thing possible to be done for those who had not yet been begotten of the Spirit and who, therefore, could not understand spiritual things. He represented in the flesh the things which really transpired in the spirit. Then the apostles could understand after they had been begotten of the Spirit, and it is from the standpoint of the begetting and not from the standpoint of the natural man that their records come down to us.

The essence of this lesson is as expressed in our Golden Text, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Others have been awakened from the sleep of death temporarily merely to relapse into it again subsequently, but our Lord Jesus was the first "born from the dead," the "first-fruits of them that slept"--as the Apostle declares, "He was the first that should rise from the dead." His resurrection was the life resurrection--to perfection on the spirit plane. In that he was the first-fruits of them that slept, the implication is that the others slept similarly and are to come forth in the

resurrection as spirit beings after the same manner. To be the first-fruits implies that the others will be of the same kind, for although our Lord was the first-fruits of all that slept in the sense that his resurrection preceded all other resurrections, in another sense he is the first-fruits of the Church, which is his body. It is in a still larger sense that the Christ, Head and body, is the first-fruits brought up to life of the whole world; as the Apostle James expresses the matter, "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."--*Jas. 1:18*.

Thus we see a first-fruits in two senses of the word: as, for instance, we see that strawberries are the first-fruits in the largest sense of the word in that they come before other fruits in the spring--so the expression that the Church is the first-fruits unto God of his creatures does not imply that all will have the same nature. Then again we may speak of the first ripe strawberries as the first-fruits of the strawberries. It was in this latter sense that our Lord Jesus was the first-fruits of the Church; and since the Church is the first-fruits of the whole creation, it follows that Christ keeps this place of primacy, not only in the Church, but in respect to all who will ever be raised up fully out of death into the fulness and perfection of life.

Z '95, 123 – 124; R1816

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD.

 --JUNE 2, *MARK 16:1-8*;--*MATT. 28:1-15*;
LUKE 24:1-12; *JOHN 20:1-18*--

Golden Text--"The Lord is risen indeed."--*Luke 24:34*.

THE resurrection of our Lord is shown by the Apostle to be the assurance of the resurrection of mankind.-- "For as all in Adam die, even so, all in Christ shall be made alive;" "for he is the propitiation for our [the Church's] sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," all of which, therefore, both the just and the unjust shall come forth from the grave; and, by accepting Christ and yielding implicitly to his guidance, they may be made fully alive--be fully restored to the original human perfection lost in Adam.

This, the Lord also taught, saying, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth." And Paul said, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." So important is this doctrine of the resurrection, that

the Apostle declares that without it the hope and faith of the Church is vain.--"If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ *are perished*....If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."--*1 Cor. 15:16-18,32*.

This doctrine of the resurrection is, however, very little heard or thought of to-day among professed Christians, and likewise the promise of the Lord's second coming, at whose presence the work of resurrection is due to be accomplished. It is written that "to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." (*Rom. 14:9*) It is his voice that shall awaken the dead, and his wisdom and grace that shall lead all the willing and obedient to the realization of full resurrection, or

restitution, to all that was lost. This is the logical consequence of his great sacrifice, to be realized at his appearing and kingdom.

The first work of his presence is the unobserved, thief-like gathering of his elect--the awakening of those that have slept in Jesus, and the perfecting and the change of those who are alive and remain to his own glorious nature and likeness. When this is fully accomplished, as it must be within this harvest period, then will follow the resurrection of the ancient worthies. Then the Kingdom of God, in both its heavenly and earthly phases, will be established and manifested to the world,--an event due at the close of this harvest period and time of trouble.

Then the resurrection morning will have come, and the Sun of righteousness will have risen with healing in his wings. Yes, "the Lord is risen indeed;" and his resurrection is the sure pledge of the resurrection of all for whom he died--of the Church first, and afterward of the world.* --*1 Cor. 15:12-23*.

The manner of the testimony as to the fact of the resurrection, as related in the gospels, is worthy of the special attention of Christians, as proving three things, (1) the fact of the resurrection, (2) the Lord's change of nature in the resurrection, and (3) his personal identity, notwithstanding the change of nature.

The fact of his resurrection was attested in three ways; viz., (1) by an earthquake and the sudden appearance of an angel whose countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, who rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulcher and sat upon it, and for fear of whom the keepers did shake and become as dead men. (*Matt. 28:1-6*.) It was attested (2) by the facts to which the angel called attention--the vacant tomb and the folded graveclothes, together with the statement that he was risen-- "And the angel said unto the woman, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (*Matt. 28:5,6*. See also *Luke 24:12*.) And (3) it was finally attested by the risen Lord himself, who appeared to the women, and others subsequently, and talked with them.--*Matt. 28:9; John 20:1-18*.

How great was the reward of these devoted women--last at the cross and first at the sepulcher, anxious to bestow upon the lifeless remains of their beloved Lord the last tokens of their esteem and love. They sympathetically lingered near the cross, beholding his dying agonies; they were the mourners that accompanied him to the tomb at night; and they were there again before break of day with their precious

ointments. In their eagerness to do this loving service, they forgot the great obstacle of the stone at the door. But the sweet incense of their devotion arose to heaven, and God sent his angel to remove the obstacle, and their zeal was rewarded with the richest tokens of his grace. Theirs was the honor of personally receiving the heavenly benedictions--of the angel and of the risen Lord,--and of first bearing the glad tidings of the resurrection to the other disciples.

The fact of the resurrection was further attested to the other disciples by the Lord's sudden appearance in their midst at various intervals, and his personal testimony and teachings on such occasions.

The Lord's change of nature in the resurrection was no less clearly testified than was the fact of his resurrection. In evidence of this note that in no instance of his appearance after his resurrection was he recognized by his personal features, although the disciples were all intimately acquainted with him, and they had been separated from him by death only three days. Mary mistook him for the gardener; the two on the way to Emmaus walked and talked with him for some miles, entertained him in their home, even dining with him, without recognizing him. In every case he was manifested to them, not by face, but by some familiar expression or tone, or teaching, which they promptly recognized as personal characteristics of him whom they so loved and revered.

Now he could enter a room, the doors being shut, and disappear as mysteriously, as he did on several occasions; and this was in exact accordance with his description of the powers of a spiritual body--which could come and go like the wind, unseen (*John 3:8*), and with his statement-- "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." It accords, too, with all the information we have concerning the appearance of angels among men. They came in sudden and unaccountable ways, vanished out of sight as mysteriously as they came, and could and did assume any appearance or features they chose. These things the Lord never did prior to his crucifixion.

Observe further the different appearances of the Lord on different occasions. At one time he appeared as a gardener, again as a stranger, again with prints of nails in his hands and the spear wound in his side, etc. On no single occasion was he known by his features on previous occasions, but always by his words, his voice, or his conduct.

Why were these changes of appearance adopted? They were for the purpose of emphasizing the fact that the bodies which they saw were not his glorious spiritual body, which no human eyes can look upon. And "it doth not yet appear" what a spiritual body is, "but we know that when he shall appear, we [the Church] shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (*1 John 3:2*.) Saul of Tarsus once caught a

*See our issue of April 1, '93.

glimpse of that glorious body, which shone above the brightness of the sun at noonday (*Acts 26:13*), but it left him blind until by a miracle his sight was restored.

The removal of the crucified body from the tomb which was also miraculous, for it did not see corruption, nor was a bone of it broken (*Psa. 34:20; 16:10*) was necessary to establish in the minds of the disciples the fact of his resurrection. Had it remained there it would have been an insurmountable barrier to their faith; nor could the astonished guards, nor the Jews, nor the world, have believed that he was risen; because they could understand nothing of the spiritual nature and the mysterious change.

To presume that Christ's glorious body is but the reanimated body of his humiliation, is to deny the assertion of the Apostle that "it doth not yet appear" what a spiritual body is (*1 John 3:2*); and to claim that that "glorious body" is ingloriously marred with the wounds of spear and spike and cruel thorns; and that the flesh which he gave for the life of the world--as our ransom price--he took back, thus rendering null and void the finished work on Calvary; and it is in direct contradiction of the statement of the Apostle

that, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more."

Let us not, dear fellow-aspirants and called ones to the sharing of his glory and nature and Kingdom, lose sight of these blessed assurances of our glorious inheritance with him, who is now a partaker of the divine nature and "the express image of the Father's person" (*Heb. 1:3*), whom no man hath seen, nor can see, and who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto. (*1 Tim. 6:15,16*.) Praise the Lord! "when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,"--not as he was; for indeed if he is as he was, then also shall we be even as we are now. If he bear still the ignominious scars of Calvary, then shall we also bear the scars that mar us; and every mutilated martyr will be disfigured to all eternity. Think you, has mortal man the power thus to harm the saints of God? Nay, verily: they shall be, "even as he is,"--"without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."*

*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 103.

=====

Z '06, 380 – 383; R3903

HE IS RISEN, EVEN AS HE SAID

--MATTHEW 28:1-15.--DECEMBER 16.--

THE PROOFS of our Lord's resurrection from the dead are quite necessary to be kept in mind by those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit; and as they were indispensable to our attainment of justifying faith in Jesus, so they are also necessary for others. Indeed none could reach the higher developments of faith and Christian experience without this foundation well established. As it was necessary for us to know that Christ died for our sins before we could believe in him as the Redeemer, as the one who had secured the right to be the Life-giver to Adam and his race, so it was necessary for us to believe more than this, namely, that he who died for our sins rose again, so that he might be our justifier, our Lord, our guide, our helper, our advocate with the Father, and by and by the Mediator between God and the world. From this standpoint, therefore, our lesson is important as providing us with the necessary reasonable proofs to lay before those who are approaching the subject--our friends, the members of our families, etc., who have not yet accepted Christ.

SUMMING UP THE PROOFS

we find that they are numerous and well substantiated, as follows:--

(1) Our Lord's death could not have been a case of suspended animation: the spear-thrust in his side made this evident, not only because it was a mortal wound, but because it furnished evidence that our Lord was already dead in that there issued from his side water as well as coagulated blood.

(2) The centurion charged with the execution was convinced of his death, and so reported to Pilate, the Governor.

(3) The request of the chief priests, that the stone against the door of the sepulcher be sealed and the Roman guard placed around the tomb, so that no one could remove the body and then pretend that Jesus had risen, was a further evidence that he was regarded as dead.

(4) His friends believed that he was dead and wrapped him in spices for burial: indeed in their grief they seem to have forgotten his promise of a resurrection--so much so that even after he had risen it was with difficulty that they were convinced.

(5) The record that the guards dissembled and declared that the disciples stole his body while they slept, being bribed by the Jewish rulers, served at last to prove that the guard had been set and that everybody recognized that Jesus was dead.

(6) The tomb in which Jesus was buried was a new one, in which no one had previously been buried, so there could be no doubt as to the identity of the one who arose. We are glad that there is such satisfactory evidence that Christ died, and that thus we have further foundation for the Scriptural assurance that he died as the Redeemer of the world. Even Strauss, the agnostic, is constrained to say on this subject, "The whole countryside knew he was dead."

THE WITNESSES MOST RELIABLE

The resurrection of Christ is vouched for by many most honorable witnesses, of whom it cannot be said that they were shrewd and learned and took advantage of opportunity to hoax the public. On the contrary, they had nothing to gain by their course--everything to jeopardize. The witnesses were not only poor but unlearned, and write themselves down as "ignorant." It would have been to their advantage to have dropped Jesus and the malodorous reputation associated with his name. They testified to his resurrection, and preached in his name and through his power as the risen one the forgiveness of sins--and did this at their own expense, with sufferings, stripes, imprisonment and cruel death as the reward. Their testimony fully concurs with the Master's own words before he died--words which his own intimate followers could not appreciate, could not comprehend--that on the third day he would rise from the dead.

The doctrine of the resurrection itself is peculiar to the Jewish and Christian religions. Other religions the world over ignore the necessity for a resurrection, and claim that those who die are more alive than they were before their death. The Apostles, on the contrary, admitted that all their hope rested in the fact that Christ did rise from the dead. Mark the Apostle Paul's words, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, your faith is also vain; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified that God raised up Christ: whom he raised not up if the dead rise not; for if the dead rise not then is not Christ risen: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."--*1 Cor. 15:14-18*.

It is not reasonable to suppose that honest men would misrepresent such a matter as the resurrection of our Lord, and it would be foolish for them to lay such stress upon a matter of which they were not morally convinced themselves. Why dwell so earnestly upon the resurrection of the dead if they had the least doubt on the subject? Why declare that all faith and all

hope in Christ, all hope of forgiveness of sins, all hope of a future life by a resurrection was at an end if Christ had not risen, unless they were satisfied beyond peradventure? Especially so when the learned of that time were teaching Plato's philosophy, that the dead are not dead but more alive, and hence need no resurrection.

Our Lord announced in advance that he would rise from the dead on the third day. In any view of the matter our Lord could not have been exactly three days and three nights in the tomb according to the record--it would have been either more or less, because he died in the afternoon and rose from the dead in the morning, hence no exact statement of even days and nights would fit the case. We recognize the custom of the times of reckoning a portion of a day or a year as though it were a complete one. For instance, throughout all the records of the chronicles of the kings we find that a portion of a year is counted for a year; that if a king reigned three years and three months it would be counted a reign of four years, or if he reigned two years and three months it would be counted three years, since he did reign for a portion of the third year. So in the statement of our Lord's period in the tomb, it is properly enough spoken of as three days and three nights, and shown thus:

JEWISH RECKONING

4 to 6 P.M. Friday==2 hours.

6 P.M. Friday to 6 P.M. Saturday==24 hours.

6 P.M. Saturday to 4 or 5 A.M. Sunday==10 or 11 hours

BY MODERN RECKONING

4 P.M. to 12 midnight, Friday==8 hours.

From midnight Friday to midnight Saturday==24 hours.

From midnight Saturday to 5 A.M. Sunday==5 hours.

Or another possible view of the matter would indicate Thursday as our Lord's death-day as follows:--

Laid in tomb--6 P.M. Thursday.

6 P.M. Thursday to 6 A.M. Friday--First night.

6 A.M. Friday to 6 P.M. Friday--First day.

6 P.M. Friday to 6 A.M. Saturday--Second night.

6 A.M. Saturday to 6 P.M. Saturday--Second day.

6 P.M. Saturday to 6 A.M. Sunday--Third night.

6 A.M. Sunday--Beginning third day.

Either view thus reckoned fulfils Peter's words, "He rose again the *third day*."

TWO VIEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

The view of the majority of Christian people is that our Lord arose from the dead to the same conditions exactly that he had during his life on earth--a man subject to the same limitations that he had before he

died. The other view is ours, namely, that our Lord arose from the dead a spirit being, but since human beings cannot see a spirit being without injury, our Lord--really a spirit being--clothed himself as it were with flesh and clothing in order to appear to his followers--in order to give them a demonstration that he was no longer dead; and secondarily by appearing to them in various forms, as a gardener, as a stranger, as a man on the shores of Galilee and as the one who was pierced--that by all these changes he might demonstrate to his followers that, although risen from the dead, he was no longer the same being as before nor subject to the same limitations as before; but now as a New Creature, a spirit being, even as he explained to Nicodemus, he had power to come and go as the wind, and none could tell from whence he came or whither he went--so is everyone born of the Spirit, everyone who experiences a resurrection to the spirit nature.--*John 3:6-8*.

Our Lord had indeed appeared subsequently to Saul of Tarsus, and manifested to him a certain measure of the glory of his resurrection condition, but the effect upon Saul was to blind him so that it required a miracle for his relief. To have so appeared to the eleven apostles and the others of the five hundred brethren who believed on him would not have been a satisfactory proof of our Lord's resurrection. They would merely have known that they had seen a great light, experienced a shock, and that they had heard certain wonderful words, but where would have been the proof to them or others of mankind that the one who was buried in Joseph's tomb had arisen from the dead and was now a spirit being? Our Lord, therefore, evidently chose by all means the better plan for making known the great fact of his resurrection. He appeared as a man, but under varying conditions, showing that he was not bound by the limitations of the human nature, but that he appeared and disappeared in bodily forms as the angels had in previous times, as for instance the three who appeared as men to Abraham for the purpose of communion with him, who ate dinner with him and whom he afterwards came to know as the Lord and two angels. For a similar purpose the Lord had appeared to his disciples after his resurrection: he veiled his glory and they saw it not when he appeared in various forms.

ERROR ALWAYS CONFUSING

The majority of Christian people are greatly confused over the matter of the resurrection anyway. Having received from heathen philosophies in the "dark ages" the same doctrines that were communicated by the Adversary to all the heathen, namely, that the dead are more alive than they ever were before, Christian people in general wonder why the Scriptures lay such stress upon the resurrection--

why there is any necessity at all for a resurrection. They properly enough reason that if they were told at the time of the funeral that their dead friend was now "free," no longer trammelled with the earthly body, etc., why would he need to be trammelled with it in the future any more than in the present? and if some had gotten along without bodies for eighteen centuries or more, why would they need bodies thereafter any more than before? All this confusion of thought is directly traceable to Satan's falsehood, "Ye shall not surely die," and the rejection of God's statement, "Ye shall surely die." When we accept the teachings of the Word of God that the dead are really dead, then we perceive that there is no hope for them ever to have any knowledge or consciousness except by resurrection of the dead--we learn that there is neither knowledge nor device nor wisdom in the grave, sheol, the state of death, whither all go. (*Eccl. 9:10*.) As an illustration of how confused some of the ablest clergymen of the country are on this matter, we quote a few words from Doctor Peloubet. He says:--

"The resurrection of Jesus shows us the meaning of the New Testament teaching concerning the resurrection of the body. So in the Apostles' Creed we declare our belief in the 'resurrection of the body.' But these things do not express what the New Testament teaches concerning the resurrection, especially in *1 Corinthians 15*. Jesus himself did not have his resurrection body till he ascended. The disciples saw the same body they had seen before the crucifixion. Our present bodies with flesh and bones cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but out from them in some way will grow spiritual bodies."

What confusion we find here! The cause is not far to seek: it is first the error of supposing that the dead are not dead, and secondly the failure to see that our Lord was "put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit," as the Apostle most explicitly tells us. (*1 Pet. 3:18*.) Thank God that with the morning light shining upon the divine Word these shadows so confusing to heart and mind are gradually fleeing away, disclosing to us new beauties in our heavenly Father's Word--consistencies, harmonies. Here we see the Apostle's statement that we are sown in weakness, raised in power, sown in dishonor, raised in glory, sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body (*1 Cor. 15:42-44*)-- not sown a natural body and raised a natural body out of which will grow a spiritual body. The Scriptures are consistent, harmonious, beautiful, when allowed to interpret themselves.

REVEREND DOCTORS CONFUSED

We suggested foregoing that the doctrine of the resurrection is a confusion to the majority of Christians, and we give another sample of this from Doctor Peloubet:--

"What is the need of a resurrection body? The body is the instrument of the soul: it is probable that the soul must have some medium of communication with other souls and with nature."

Now consider: Our dear friends hold that the souls never die, although the Scriptures tell us that a death sentence is upon every soul of man, and that Christ poured out his soul unto death as our ransom price.) For our views on this subject, "What is the soul?" we refer the reader to MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. VI., page 346.) Doctor Peloubet probably holds in common with others that the undying souls go either to heaven or hell immediately at death, that the resurrection will not take place until the second coming of Christ, which he in common with others probably places a long way off; and yet he tells us here that the souls in heaven and in hell would have no instrument of communication with each other and with nature without a body. Hence we might reason, if they could not in any manner communicate with nature, they could not even enjoy pleasures or suffer pain. How much more reasonable is the Scriptural proposition that man himself is a soul, a being, that in dying his being is dissolved, that the resurrection is a resurrection of being by a reorganization of conditions necessary to restore him--the producing of a body with talents and powers to correspond and vitalized by the great Life-Giver who declares, "I am the resurrection and the Life."

OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION

With the foregoing suggestions respecting the fact that our Lord's resurrection is well vouched for by good authority, and that he was raised a spirit being, let us proceed to an examination of the lesson. The narrative is simple, unvarnished, natural. The different gospels tell of the matter in different language, narrating sometimes the same item in different form and sometimes different items connected with the manifestations of the forty days of our Lord's presence after he arose from the dead and before he ascended on high. Although these accounts differ they in nowise contradict each other; each told what he himself saw and knew, whereas had the account been a spurious one, gotten up to deceive, undoubtedly great care would have been exercised to have every witness tell the same thing. Here, then, is a sure proof of the truthfulness of the records.

To draw an illustration from more modern history: We notice the fact that several generals present at the battle of Waterloo gave very different accounts of the same--especially respecting the time of the beginning of the battle. Two armies of men witnessed the matter, yet an authoritative account of just when it opened cannot today be known. The Duke of Wellington declared that it began at ten o'clock in the morning,

and General Alba, who rode beside him, says the hour was eleven-thirty; Napoleon and one of his assistants, Douret, claimed that it began at twelve o'clock, and General Ney asserted that it began at one o'clock. Evidently these different persons had different conceptions of the matter: one may have counted from the time the first gun was fired, another from a period of the general engagement, or what not. No one thinks of questioning the fact that there was a battle of Waterloo because of these divergent statements respecting the time it began. So with the matter of our Lord's resurrection, the fact that the different records of it are not in the same language militates nothing against the fact as a fact. All agree that the resurrection took place on the first day of the week (Sunday) following the Passover, early in the morning. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the mother of James the Less and of Joses, were there (*Matt. 27:56*), and Mark and Luke tell us that shortly afterward came Salome the mother of John, Joanna the wife of Chuza, and other women, who brought spices for a more thorough embalming of the Lord's body than was possible on the night of our Lord's burial, on account of the lateness of the hour and the approach of the Passover.

The earthquake had already rolled away the stone, the sentries had fled in terror from the manifestation of the angel's presence--they fled to the high priest, who probably had engaged to be their paymaster--having them detailed for a special police duty by Pilate. But the angel, so terrible to those out of harmony with the Lord, spoke graciously to those who were his friends, assuring them that Jesus was risen, and directing them to go quickly and tell his disciples, also assuring them that Jesus would go into Galilee, and intimating a general meeting of his friends there, which later took place. En route they met Jesus, who sent the same message to his disciples. Seemingly the Lord recognized that woman can exercise faith more readily than can man, and here he used them as his servants and mouthpieces to bear his message--to prepare his disciples, to assist them more readily to accept the truth of his resurrection. Meantime the affrighted guard fled and told the circumstances to the prominent elders who had set them their task and who were probably special enemies of our Lord. They were assured that their work would be considered satisfactory if they would keep the facts to themselves or report that Jesus' disciples had stolen the corpse. They gave them a handsome present for their cooperation in this matter and assured them of protection should their conduct ever be called in question.

ELEVEN APPEARANCES AT MOST

For forty days our Lord was with his disciples before his ascension, yet he revealed himself to them, according to the records, not more than eleven times in all--and some of these instances are probably duplications. His interviews with the disciples lasted but for a few moments each, and were surrounded by circumstances and conditions which said to them in thunder tones that a great change had occurred to him--that he was no longer the same being, although he evidently had the same loving interest in them as before. He was still their Lord and Master, this same Jesus, although no longer Jesus in the flesh. He was "the Lord, that spirit," a "quickenning spirit." To bring the matter more clearly before our minds let us note the records covering these manifestations or appearances, as follows:

ON THE DAY OF THE RESURRECTION

(1) Sunday morning early--to Mary Magdalene--near the sepulchre at Jerusalem.--*Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18.*

(2) Sunday morning--to the women returning from the sepulchre--near Jerusalem.--*Matt. 28:9,10.*

(3) Sunday--to Simon Peter alone--near Jerusalem. --*Luke 24:34.*

(4) Sunday afternoon--to the two disciples going to Emmaus--between Jerusalem and Emmaus.--*Luke 24:13-21.*

(5) Sunday evening--to the apostles excepting Thomas --at Jerusalem.--*John 20:19-25.*

All five of these were on the first day, the resurrection day, the remaining six appearances being scattered through the remaining thirty-nine days of our Lord's presence, as follows:

THE NEXT SUNDAY--THE EIGHTH DAY

(6) Sunday evening, a week after the resurrection--to the apostles, Thomas being present--at Jerusalem.--*John 20:26-29.*

Following this was a long interval apparently in which there was no appearance whatever, and the disciples, discouraged, perplexed, resolved to go back to their homes in Galilee and there to reengage in the fishing business, considering that the Lord and his mission had been a failure. Our Lord evidently expected just such a process of reasoning on their part, and his delay was undoubtedly to help them over the difficulty and to start them afresh as servants of the Kingdom of God on a higher and still grander plane than their previous ministries had been--under the ministration of the holy Spirit.

APPEARANCES IN GALILEE

Quite probably three weeks intervened without the slightest communication. Meantime the apostles had reengaged in the fishing business, when our Lord appeared to them on the shores of Galilee.

(7) As a stranger on the shore Jesus called to seven of his disciples who were fishing--*John 21:1-13.*

(8) Shortly after the manifestation on the shores of Galilee Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee.--*Matt. 28:16-20.*

(9) Very shortly after this he again appeared to a general company of his followers gathered together by previous appointment, "above 500 brethren at once"--in Galilee.-- *1 Cor. 15:6.*

LAST APPEARANCE IN JERUSALEM

(10) At the close of the forty days our Lord appeared to the Apostle James only, probably at Jerusalem.-- *1 Cor. 15:7.*

(11) At the end of the forty days our Lord appeared to all of the apostles at the time of his ascension. This was at the Mount of Olives.--*Luke 24:50,51; Acts 1:6-9.*

It was years after this that Paul wrote, "Last of all he was seen by me also, as of one born before the time." He was seen of the other apostles as the gardener, as a stranger, as the Crucified One, etc., etc., but when Paul, the last of the apostles, saw him it was not so, but as we shall see him by and by when we are changed to his likeness--he saw him as one of premature birth. The Church of the First-Born are at the resurrection changed to be like their Lord and see him as he is. Any special revelation of the Lord might have been withheld from the Apostle Paul until the same time except that it was necessary that the apostles should be "witnesses," testifiers to the fact that Christ had not only died but had also risen from the dead; and in order that Paul as an Apostle might thus testify he was granted the vision of the glorified one. He saw him as we shall see him in that he saw him in the brightness of his excellent glory and not as the others, veiled in the flesh. Thank God that the time is not far distant when, those who sleep in Jesus having been changed to his image, we who are alive and remain shall also be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to be made like him, to see him as he is, to share his glory. Not all in the same moment, but each in his own moment, changed instantly--until gradually, thus being changed by passing from death to life, the full number of the very elect shall be completed and the reign of glory shall begin.

=====

COMMUNING WITH THE LORD.

LUKE 24:13-35.--APRIL 21.

"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way!"

A LITTLE talk with Jesus, how it cheers our lonely way!" writes the poet, and who that is a Christian has failed of this experience? And fortunate are those who early learn, that while we should greatly appreciate our privilege of talking with the Lord, in prayer, we are to recognize that it is not this that brings the full blessing; but our attentive hearing, understanding and appreciating what he says to us;--the Word of Truth. Our hearts burn while *he talks* and we listen, more than when we talk even to him.

Toward evening of the day of our Lord's resurrection, two of his followers, one of them apparently Simon Peter (*vs. 34*), the other Cleopas, passed along the country road leading from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about eight miles distant, evidently the home of Cleopas who would entertain Peter, whose home was in Galilee. Like all the followers of Jesus they had been greatly exercised and perturbed by the remarkable events connected with our Lord's last visit, in connection with the Passover--his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the cleansing of the Temple; the routing of his ecclesiastical foes in debate; his remarkable teachings during those few days; his arrest, trial and crucifixion. The excitement of their hearts made other business for the time impossible, and they spent the day in Jerusalem probably without knowing just why, except that they desired to be in touch with fellow believers. They shared with all the Lord's friends in the considerable excitement, resulting from the reports given by the sisters who went to embalm our Lord's body, that the tomb was empty and that they had seen angels who said that Jesus was alive again.

Full of the subject so close to their hearts, they were discussing in animated conversation the likelihood and unlikelihood of the reports they had heard, and in general the Messianic hopes of themselves and their nation, which they had trusted would have been amply fulfilled by Jesus, whose death seemed to throw all of their expectations into confusion. It was at this juncture that Jesus was drawing near them, disguised in a body of flesh and ordinary clothing--with a face different from what they had previously recognized, yet nevertheless gentle, soothing, sympathetic. He inquired the occasion of their discussion, which seemed to be respecting some sad subject. This kindly interest was not resented as an intrusion, but rather their burdened hearts rejoiced to find a sympathetic ear

to which their perplexities could be related. How much of human nature there is in all this! How favorable is a time of adversity and perplexity in which to approach those whom we desire to assist; but how necessary it is that we should learn of the Master how to approach with such sympathy in word and act as to gain the hearts of those whom we would serve and bless. Love is the secret of gentleness, of sympathy, of all real heart-helpfulness. In order to be more useful in life, the Lord's people need to become more and more filled with his spirit of love;--copies of God's dear Son.

It was no deception on our Lord's part to inquire what things they were sad about, altho he knew everything better than they. It is sometimes the part of wisdom not to tell all that we know, if we can the better help others by inquiring of them. In this instance we can see the wisdom of our Lord's course, for the minds of the two travelers were lifted from any points of disputation and drawn to a general review of the circumstances of the preceding days, and this furnished the best foundation for our Lord's exposition of the meaning of and the reason for the things which perplexed them.

Jesus did not reply to their surprised expression that he must be a newcomer in the city not to have heard of the wonderful things that had recently transpired. He let them proceed to declare their faith in him and how they viewed the situation. The portion of their conversation recorded implies clearly that however much their confidence might have been shaken respecting our Lord's Messiahship, and their hopes, that it would have been he that would have redeemed (delivered) Israel from the Roman yoke and exalted her as God's agency, the seed of Abraham, for blessing all the families of the earth, they still believed in him as a great Teacher, a prophet--"mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." This was a good confession, all that could have been asked, and quite sufficient for our Lord to use in rebuilding their confidence in himself, in his Messiahship--on a surer, a better, a more positive foundation.

While it was expedient for him to start the matter by questioning them, it would not have been wisdom to have continued thus to any great length; for he had the message, they needed the instruction: we, as his followers, may learn a lesson from his course in this also. As soon as he had their minds in the channel to receive the lessons he would give them, he began to *open* unto them the Scriptures concerning himself--to

expound them, to show their true meaning and fulfilment. We here see the proper course of the teacher illustrated by the great Teacher himself. As he went to the Scriptures and brought forth from them evidences of divine foreknowledge and prediction respecting the things that were transpiring before their eyes, so we, if we attempt to teach others, should not be content with offering our views, our opinions, our conjectures, but should search the Scriptures and be able, from that source to give to every man a reason for the hopes that are within us--that his hopes, as well as ours, may be built up, not upon the theories of men, but upon the inspired teachings of God's Word. Higher critics, Evolutionists, etc., never follow the method which our Lord Jesus here emphasized as the proper one: on the contrary, denying any special inspiration of Moses and the prophets, they ignore them, and offer instead, as of superior value, their own conjectures. Let us not only ignore such teachers as blind guides, attempting to mislead the Lord's flock, but let us also, to whatever extent we have opportunity to teach others, see that we follow not in their footsteps, but in those of our dear Redeemer. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word there is *no light* in them." (*Isa. 8:20.*) And those who follow such teachers as have "no light" are sure to get further and further into darkness.

We are not informed what features of the Law and the Prophets our Lord enunciated; but we can surmise that he pointed out to them in Moses' writings various features of the Law which pointed to himself as the paschal Lamb, whose death must take place before the first-born and all Israel could be delivered from the bondage of sin, and from the great task-master, prefigured by Pharaoh, and be led ultimately into the Canaan of promise. We can surmise that he recalled to them Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the typical seed of promise, and how this represented the actual death of Messiah, the antitypical seed, the Son of God. We may presume that he called their attention to various of the psalms, which prophetically spoke, not only of the glories of his reign, but also of his sufferings and his death, and his subsequent exaltation to the right hand of the majesty of God. No doubt he called their attention also to the utterances of Daniel the Prophet, respecting Messiah's being cut off in death, but not for himself. Undoubtedly he reminded them of the words of Isaiah, that Messiah should be led as a lamb to the slaughter, be despised and rejected of men, and how, nevertheless, in due time God would set him as his King upon his holy hill, Zion.

Spellbound with this wonderful exposition of the divine Word, his listeners drank it in, realizing its truth by the manner in which it harmonized the various testimonies of God's Word--nor did they think for a moment of inquiring of their teacher whether or not he

had an ordination from the scribes and Pharisees, with a license to preach. They perceived that he had a divine ordination, and this was fully attested by his ability to make clear to them what other teachers could not make clear.

The eight miles of the journey seemed all too short, as they reached their home, and they were loath to part with the wonderful teacher, whom they supposed they had fallen in with by accident, never dreaming to what extent divine providence was guiding their affairs. It was drawing toward evening, and the stranger was bidding them adieu, as tho intent upon a further journey; and indeed, he surely would have gone from them had they not been sufficiently appreciative of what they had already heard to constrain him earnestly to remain with them and partake of their hospitalities. So it is with all of us, as the Lord's disciples whom he is instructing, after we have been taught of him. If our hearts fail to burn with responsive love and zeal and appreciation, the blessing will pass from us and we will fail to reach the climax of joy in a full recognition of who our Teacher has been. While the Lord draws nigh to us with his grace and truth, without solicitation, he passes us by unless his message is appreciated so that we shall constrain him, urge him to abide with us, to continue the conversation--unless we shall proffer him in turn our hospitalities, our temporal things, in endeavoring to make some slight recompense for the spiritual favors showered upon us.

Our Lord accepted their urgent invitation and remained; supper was prepared, and recognizing their new acquaintance as a great teacher or prophet they requested that he should return thanks for their evening meal. It was while he was thus asking a blessing upon it and upon them that the eyes of their understanding were opened--it dawned upon them that their guest was no other than Jesus himself! Perhaps the language used in the blessing was such as they had heard him use before, or perhaps in some other way their understanding was opened.

Having accomplished his purpose, our Lord vanished from their sight. Thus, in addition to the instruction impressed upon their minds, he showed them by this vanishing that he was no longer the *man* Christ Jesus--that he was "changed"--that the resurrected Jesus was a *spirit being*, who could come and go like the wind, as he had explained to Nicodemus (*John 3:8*), appearing and disappearing, as he had never done previously, but as angels had frequently done. Moreover, they realized from this illustration that our Lord could appear in any kind of a body, and with any kind of clothing, as might best serve his purposes. They did not know him by the marks in his hands and his feet, nor by the seamless robe; for he had not appeared to them in these, but in *another form*, as an ordinary traveler whose features

they did not recognize. Had he borne the prints of the nails in his hands and his feet they surely would have noticed them during their long walk; just as Mary would surely have noticed them when she grasped our Lord by the feet. But they had an explanation of the whole matter now; they understood why this stranger had been able to present the divine word with such clearness and force and beauty as to cause their hearts to burn with fresh love and zeal and hope. They were glad.

Let us pause here to note some of the conditions which evidently led up to this blessing, that we may apply the same to ourselves, realizing that our Lord operates very generally along the lines of fixed principles, and that if we would be the recipients of his special favor and instruction, and have our hearts burn with the spirit of his truth, we should expect such experiences along somewhat similar lines to those observed in connection with the two who went to Emmaus. We remark, first, that this is an illustration of our Lord's promise that where two or three are together in his name--considering him, his word, his promises, his blessings--there he will be in the midst, and a blessing shall result. This may be in a country road, in the home circle, or in the more general gatherings of the Lord's people for worship, prayer and study of the truth. How this reminds us of the injunction, "Forget not the assembling of yourselves--and so much the more as ye see *the day* drawing on." Who has not noticed the blessing that comes to those who remember these promises of the Lord's Word, and who act upon them? Who has not noticed in his own experience, as well as in that of others, the danger of neglecting these admonitions--the danger of doubts, fears, indifference, coldness, worldliness? It is undoubtedly true today, as much as or more than ever, that we need such fellowship, and it is to such who seek it that the Lord reveals himself.

Let us mark again the word of the Prophet, "They that feared the Lord *spake often* together; and the Lord hearkened and heard it," and noted it in the book of remembrance. Let us remember, too, that it is declared of such, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels." (*Mal. 3:16-18.*) We are not saying that others will not be the Lord's, nor does the Lord say so; but we may be well assured that those who have opportunities for meeting together and speaking together, and who fail to use the opportunities, are manifesting a lack of interest in our great salvation; and that such are very likely to lose the remainder of their interest, and failing of the Lord's instruction given to such, that they may fail also to be amongst the "jewels" whom he will gather. If on the contrary one feels little interest in the heavenly things, little disposed to discuss the features of the divine plan and its promises, and happy only when conversing on

worldly matters, business, etc., it is an unfavorable sign. The Lord is not likely to approach such and open their understanding respecting the Scriptures, as he surely is pleased to do to those who are hungering and thirsting after truth.

Many are so situated that they are unable to gratify the desires of their hearts in respect to assembling frequently with others of like precious faith, to talk over the good things of the Lord's Word of promise; but the isolated should not feel disappointed that the Lord's Word says that he will meet with the twos and threes, and does not promise the same to the solitary. They should rather look about them to see what provision the Lord has made whereby at least two can meet and discuss his Word together. We suggest, dear friends, that the Master has made special arrangements for all of his people in this respect in our day; for all, the world over, who so desire may have such a meeting at least twice a month, through the regular visits of the WATCH TOWER--and he that hath no money has the same opportunities as others (as will be seen by the terms on the second page of each issue). We believe this is a divine provision for the necessities of many, and we urge that all avail themselves of this as well as of every other privilege the Lord may grant for fellowship, for communion in spiritual things. The written message is not different from the spoken one.

The Editor of this journal, through its columns, is pleased to meet with those of the Lord's people who desire fellowship and communion respecting the Lord's Word; and the reading of expositions of the Scriptures in the WATCH TOWER differs nothing from hearing the utterance of the same words by any living person who might meet with you. We claim no infallibility for our presentations, nor do we simply offer our opinions and conjectures, after the manner of the scribes and Pharisees; but rather after the manner of the great Teacher, we seek to present to the minds of those interested the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and to voice the testimony of Jesus and the apostles, and to show the harmony of the Scriptures.

As soon as the Emmaus brethren recognized their guest, and he vanished, they understood well the meaning of the joy, the refreshment and the burning zeal in their hearts which his expositions of the truth had inspired. They had thus a confirmation of the words of the angels to the sisters in the morning, that Jesus was risen. The news was too good to be kept, even until the next morning. They must and did start immediately for the city, altho it was a journey of at least eight miles. How different their feelings as they set out in return from those when they left the brethren at Jerusalem, their hearts sad and their minds full of questionings! Now they were full of joy; for they saw that our Lord's crucifixion, so far from being the end of their hopes, was really the foundation for them; that

as our Lord explained, "Thus it behooved Messiah to suffer before he would enter into his glory"--that unless he had suffered--died--the race would not have been purchased at the hands of Justice, and the condemnation of death would still rest upon it and make any permanent blessing impossible; but now, the redemption price having been paid, the way was open, first for the reconciliation of the Royal Priesthood who should be joint-heirs with Jesus as the Seed of Abraham, and subsequently, in God's due time, would follow the times of restitution of all things, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Some such thoughts as these engaged them as they returned to Jerusalem, and arriving at the upper room found the eleven (except Thomas--the term "eleven" being used in a general sense, and not a particular sense, as referring to the apostles in general and not to

the exact number) with others of the company assembled. Then there was general rejoicing in the information that Jesus had revealed himself to Peter, as they related their joyful experiences, and how the Lord had been known to them in the breaking of the bread and the asking of the blessing. Doubtless it was this experience that led subsequently to the custom of the disciples having a meal in common on every first day of the week, at which they again in imagination recognized the Lord present in their midst, blessing the bread and opening the eyes of their understanding. Thus each first day of the week they called to mind how he opened unto them the Scriptures and sought to keep the eyes of their understanding open and to grow in grace, in knowledge and in love.

Z '95, 135 – 136; R1823

THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

--JUNE 9, *LUKE 24:13-32.*--

Golden Text--"He opened to us the Scriptures."--Luke 24:32.

ONE thought in connection with this familiar narrative is the privilege and blessing of the communion of saints. Wherever two or three are met together in my name, said the Lord, there am I in the midst. (*Matt. 18:20.*) These two disciples (not apostles: see *verses 18,33*) were earnestly discussing the sad events of the last few days, which so perplexed them all. They had trusted that he who had just been crucified was the true Messiah foretold by the prophets: he had seemed to fit the descriptions of the prophets so perfectly, but now he was very generally esteemed as "smitten of God and afflicted." Their sad and perplexed faces were indexes of their minds. They had loved the Lord and trusted in him, and they delighted to call to mind his sweet spirit, his wise counsel, his wonderful teaching and his great love for each of them personally. How strange it seemed that such a one should so perish!

Yes, they loved the Lord, and delighted to speak one with another, and to think upon his name; and the Lord hearkened and heard it (*Mal. 3:16,17*): he was beside them all the while though they knew it not, and soon he seemed to overtake them, and gave them a stranger's greeting. Then followed the marvelous opening up of the Scriptures to them. How familiar the stranger seemed to be with the law and the prophets; and how wonderfully he wove together the web of logical and Scriptural argument, to prove it necessary that Messiah must suffer these things before he could enter into his glory! Surely enough, it was all there in

the sacred writings, but they had never seen it so before. How reasonable, too, when thus viewed!

Then they told him of the strange news they had heard of his resurrection that very morning; and as he further explained how this also was so to be, as foretold by the prophets, they drew near home and the stranger was therefore about to take leave of them. But their interest in the conversation was too deep to part thus abruptly with him, and they urged him to tarry and partake of their hospitality.

Earnest inquiry and generous hospitality were strong incentives to the Lord, as they always are. So he accepted the invitation; and soon they were made cognizant of the fact that the Lord himself was indeed their guest. And his blessing sank deep in their hearts, and they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us by the way?

Let us take to our hearts the precious lesson of this incident, that we may 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.*

PETER AND THE RISEN LORD.

--JUNE 16, JOHN 21:4-17.--

Golden Text--"Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."--John 21:17.

IN addition to the special teachings of these several narratives of the Lord's appearance to his disciples after his resurrection, which were, first, to convince them of his resurrection; and, second, to convince them of his change of nature, which teachings we have noted in previous lessons, we would here call attention to the thrice repeated question of our Lord to Peter--"Lovest thou me?"--and Peter's reply, and his renewed commission to preach the gospel.

Thrice had Peter denied the Lord--though under extreme temptation--and the denial was sincerely repented of with bitter tears; and now thrice would the Lord have him reaffirm his devotion to him, and receive three additional assurances of his ample reinstatement in his love and favor.

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?' He saith unto him, 'Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.' He saith unto him, 'Feed my lambs.'"

The question arises, With what did our Lord bring himself into comparison in Peter's mind when he said, "Lovest thou me *more than these?*" Could he have referred to the other disciples present on that occasion? We think not; for the Lord had no disposition either to embarrass Peter and the others with a tone of sarcasm, nor to inspire nor encourage boastfulness. And Peter's prompt affirmative answer indicates nothing of either embarrassment or boastfulness, but instead, a loving sincerity, which was glad of the opportunity to respond promptly and warmly --"Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."

With what then did the Lord institute the comparison? Evidently with the fishing tackle and the business prospects represented in them. Once, in obedience to the Lord's call, he had left these to follow him; and then, in the interval of perplexity since his resurrection, not knowing what else to do, he had gone back to the old business. So the Lord inquired how he felt about it now, since the reproach of the crucifixion. It was as though he had said, Are you willing again, Simon, in the face of all the public prejudice and hate and the reproach of the cross to leave all your business and social prospects and go out again to preach the Kingdom of God and the return in glory and power of the crucified One? Are you willing, too, to incur the additional reproach and persecution which zeal and faithfulness in my cause are sure to bring?

Yes, Peter was ready, and so were all those dear disciples, again to forsake all and take up the cause of their crucified and risen Lord, and boldly and openly to proclaim the coming Kingdom and glory of him whom the Jews had taken and, with wicked hands, had crucified and slain. Only the doubt which seemed to be implied in the third repetition of the question grieved Peter. His was an ardent, warm nature, and he wanted the Lord to be fully persuaded of his love and zeal. It grieved him, therefore, to feel that possibly yet there was a shadow of doubt, a little cloud, between him and the Lord which his repentance had not fully removed. But the Lord quickly removed the cloud and enabled him to realize his full reinstatement as an accepted and beloved disciple, in full fellowship and cooperation with himself.

The question thus addressed to Peter--"Lovest thou me more than these?" is the question addressed to every consecrated follower of the Lord, without a single exception. If we have given ourselves unreservedly to the Lord, the necessities of his work are before us, to prove the sincerity and strength of our love. Nor has the reproach of the cross yet ceased: indeed, in this end of the age, as in the beginning, the reproach of the cross is bitter and determined; and it is more and more so every year as prominent ecclesiastics lead the way toward the ditch of open and avowed infidelity. So to each of us comes the testing question, "Lovest thou me *more than these?*"--more than the business pursuits and prospects, more than the social ties and pleasures, more than ease, or comfort, or friends, or fame, or wealth, or a good name, or any earthly good?

Ah! it is truly a test question, and a question which no one can sincerely answer in the affirmative who has not the inspiring incentive of love in the heart. But pure, fervent love to Christ does quicken zeal, and enable those who have it to respond gladly and promptly, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," and sends them forth with joy to prove their love by their works. "If any man love me, let him take up his cross daily, and follow me." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "The servant is not greater than his lord: if they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs."

I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE.

--JOHN 20:11-23.--JUNE 4.--

Golden Text:--"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."--1 Cor. 15:20.

WHILE the death of Christ was the greatest event in history, his resurrection from death readily holds second place. The death of Christ without his resurrection would have left our race just as helpless and hopeless as before. The word death signifies the absence of life just as truly when applied to our Redeemer as when applied to others. The Scriptural statement that "The dead know not anything" applied to him while dead as truly as to others, as also the declaration, "There is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave"--sheol, hades. No religion in the world other than that taught in the Bible teaches the resurrection of the dead. Heathen philosophies assume, contrary to the Scriptures, contrary to reason, contrary to facts, contrary to all the evidences of the senses, that the dead are not dead, but, on the contrary, more alive than ever before.

It is because so many Christian people have imbibed much of heathen philosophy on this subject of death that to many of them the resurrection of the dead is a superfluous matter, to say the least. Indeed they reason soundly when they say that if Abraham lived 175 years in this world and at death passed into the spirit world more alive than ever, where he has been enjoying himself in spirit surroundings for the past 3,800 years, they can see no reason why he might not continue to enjoy himself just as well for all eternity in that condition. Indeed they argue forcefully, logically, that if, according to their expectations, his resurrection by and by will mean a return to earthly conditions after so long an experience in spirit conditions, he doubtless would, if given his choice, prefer that there should be no resurrection.

THE INSPIRED RECORD REASONABLE

The difficulty is that the Scriptural teachings on the subject are wholly overlooked in such reasoning. According to the Scriptures Abraham has known nothing since he died, and the moment of his resurrection will mean the revival of all his previous experiences and hopes at a time and under conditions which will permit of the fulfilment to him of all of God's gracious promises. Without resurrection he would be, as the infidel claims, "dead as a door nail." From this Scriptural point of view it will be readily seen that the resurrection of the dead is all important, that on it depends all hopes of eternal life. That this is the Scriptural teaching we shall see.

The Golden Text of our Lesson is from the chapter which explains the subject of resurrection more particularly than does any other chapter in the Bible. It assures us that Christ was dead and that he is arisen from the dead. In this it agrees with our Lord's own words (*Rev. 1:18*), "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore." How plain, how forceful are these words when given their proper weight, their true signification! Life and death are here referred to as opposites--he is not dead now, but is alive; when he was dead he was not alive. It seems strange that it should be necessary to examine so simple a statement. It surely would not be necessary to discuss the matter at all with thinking people were it not that the error of thinking of the dead as alive is so prevalent, so deeply entrenched in all our minds, in all our thoughts.

Further, our Golden Text declares that our Lord in his resurrection became the "first-fruits of them that slept." What does this mean? It means what the Apostle states in other language, saying that he "should be the first that should rise from the dead;" and again, he was the "first-born from the dead." (*Acts 26:23; Col. 1:18*.) None before him was ever resurrected, though a few were temporarily awakened, as, for instance, Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, and the widow of Nain's son. Jesus was the first to be raised completely out of death's power--to perfection of life, of being, on any plane of existence. And the word "first-fruits" carries with it the thought that there are to be others who similarly will pass completely out of death conditions into perfect life conditions.

"IF THERE BE NO RESURRECTION"

In the context (*1 Cor. 15:12-18*) the Apostle seeks to impress upon his hearers the importance of the doctrine of the resurrection as connected with the Christian religion. He wrote at a time when the Greek philosophies were invading all parts of the then civilized world, and when many, imbued with the Platonic theory that the dead are alive, had become interested in Christ and were more or less associating the Platonic view that there is no death with the Christian view that death is the penalty for sin, but that Christ paid that penalty, and that as a result the resurrection from the dead is made possible for every member of Adam's race. Because of the prevalence of the error the Apostle was constrained to state the truth in the most positive form. He says:

"If Christ hath been preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

There is no reasonable ground for misunderstanding these plain statements. Only deep-seated errors have hindered us from attaching to these inspired words their true meaning. They mean what they say: that if Jesus remained dead, if he was not raised up from death to life, he did not complete the work he undertook, he did not become the Savior, the Deliverer. True, indeed, his death was necessary as the redemption price, but it was also a part of the divine plan that if he accomplished the sacrifice in a manner satisfactory to the Father, he would be raised from death to a higher plane of existence, to a higher than human nature, to the divine nature, and that thus raised he should have the opportunity of presenting the merit of his sacrifice on behalf of the Church first and subsequently for the sins of the whole world.

If he remained in death, was not resurrected, it would be a proof that he had failed to come up to the divine requirements. If he remained in death, was not resurrected, then he could never present his sacrifice on our behalf, could never appear as our advocate and mediator, could never secure our release from the sentence of death, and could never be our helper to bring us back into accord with the Father. Hence, as the Apostle says, "If Christ be not risen the teachings of the apostles are all false," for they are all built upon this central fact that "Jesus rose on the third day." Hence again, as he states it, if Christ be not risen it proves that our hope of forgiveness of sins through the merit of his sacrifice is a vain one--then he did not appear on our behalf, he did not offer the merit of his sacrifice in mediation of our sins, we are not reconciled to the Father, we are yet in our sins, yet under condemnation, without hope.

"MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS"

Then comes in our Golden Text, in which the Apostle reassures us that it is no fable, that Christ arose from the dead, that it was not only necessary to our salvation, but that it is a fact well attested. He proceeds in his argument to show that thus by the resurrection of Christ is ultimately to come the resurrection of the Church to full harmony with God,

ultimately to be completely delivered from the power of sin and death--"As all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive"-- a full release from death, which is the great enemy. He proceeds to say that ultimately, at his second advent, "Christ must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

With this view of the importance of the resurrection of Jesus, we cannot wonder that the Scriptures lay great stress upon that fact, and deduce various proofs and demonstrations intended to establish our faith in it. All four of the evangelists give the details respecting our Lord's resurrection and manifestation to his apostles with great particularity. In the book of the *Acts (1:3)*, the writer begins with this assurance, that Jesus "showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of his disciples [occasionally] during the space of forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."

When the Apostle would outline the great plan of God he shows the importance of the resurrection, not only for Jesus but also for all who ever shall be blessed through him as the Savior. He begins his dissertation on the subject by saying, "I delivered to you first of all that which I also received [first of all]: how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, and after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles, and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

A VERY PREVALENT ERROR

Those who think of the dead as being alive and who still desire to apply in some manner the Scriptural teaching respecting the resurrection, have forced themselves to the thought that it is a resurrection of the body that is promised, which is a mistake. It is the being or soul that has the promise of a resurrection, and some beings or souls are to be resurrected to one plane of existence and others to another plane. For instance, the promise to the Church of Christ is a resurrection in a spirit body. The Apostle describes "the" resurrection of "the" dead as the resurrection of the Church, born again to a new nature, a spiritual, a heavenly nature. He says of the being or soul of such, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body it is raised a spiritual body."

Although not discussing particularly the resurrection for the remainder of the world, the Apostle intimates that not all will be raised celestial bodies, heavenly

bodies, and he explains that there is a glory for the celestial and a glory also for the terrestrial. He proceeds to contrast the first Adam, of the earth earthy, with the second Adam, the heavenly Lord, saying, "The first was made a living soul [an animal being], the last was made a life-giving spirit." But it was not until our Lord's resurrection that he became a life-giving spirit, for as the Apostle Peter declares elsewhere, "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit." These two Adams are samples or patterns of what mankind may attain to in the resurrection: the Church is to attain to the likeness of the second Adam, the world the likeness of the first Adam--"as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."

Only the Church of this Gospel age has been granted the opportunity of becoming spiritual children of God, joint-heirs with Christ their Lord. Theirs is the great blessing, the privilege of the first resurrection, concerning which the Scriptures declare, "Blessed and holy are they who have part in the first resurrection; on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." It is this wonderful hope that God has set before us in the Gospel, the hope of participation with our Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time and also in the glories that shall follow, and our hope is attainable in and through and by the first resurrection, of which the Lord was the first fruits.

Subsequently will come the world's opportunity for a resurrection. This is elsewhere described as restitution, a return to all that was lost in Adam--a return to the likeness of God in the flesh which Adam had before he transgressed, and which all of his children are yet to attain to if they will--through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus and during the period of his Millennial Kingdom. The world's hope in Christ is a resurrection hope and a glorious one, but the hope of the Church excels in glory, honor and immortality.

MARY THE FIRST WITNESS

The honor of being the first witness to whom our Lord manifested himself after his resurrection came to Mary Magdalene, who at one time was possessed by evil spirits, but who, being freed from their domination became a faithful and loyal follower of Jesus. This was not the Mary, sister of Lazarus and Martha, neither was it Mary the "sinner," who washed our Lord's feet with her tears in the Pharisee's house. She is called Mary Magdalene, probably because her home town was Magdala.

Early on the next morning after the Sabbath--corresponding to our Sunday, the first day of the week-- Mary had an appointment with others of the Lord's friends to go to the tomb with spices, etc., to

embalm his body, a proceeding which had been impossible because of the lateness of the hour of his crucifixion, and because on the Sabbath intervening no such work was permissible under the Law. Their thought was to take advantage of the very earliest opportunity for the embalming before decomposition could set in. Arising earlier than her companions Mary went alone to the sepulcher, and, looking in, saw that the body of Jesus was gone. She wondered why he had been removed and where, and wept; then stooping down again, because the door of the sepulcher was low, she beheld two persons in white raiment, whom she recognized as angels, sitting at the head and foot of the place where Jesus' body had lain, as though they were keeping guard. They asked why she wept; she answered because they had taken away her Lord and she knew not where they had laid him.

Turning, Mary saw a man near her, whom she took to be the caretaker of the garden in which was Joseph's tomb. He also asked why she wept, and she appealed to him that if he had removed the body, being dissatisfied that it should remain in that tomb, if he would give it to her care she would take charge of it. Nothing about this person indicated who he was. He looked like a gardener, probably had on gardener's clothing-- (his own clothing we know had been appropriated by the soldiers who crucified him, and the linen clothes were still lying in the tomb). It was not until Jesus called her by name, probably in the old familiar voice, that she recognized that the one before her was her Lord--in a different body, in another form, but still he.

Falling at his feet and clasping them she simply uttered the word, "Rabboni!" Master; but Jesus did not encourage her to thus continue, but intimated rather that, having knowledge of his resurrection, she should become the newsbearer or gospeller to the disciples, informing them that he was risen and that by and by he would ascend, "To your Father and to my Father, to your God and to my God."

ART THOU A STRANGER?

Our risen Lord evidently revealed himself to Mary only by his voice. The clothing was not such as he had previously worn nor was the appearance the same; she knew him not until he spoke. Later in the day two of his disciples were going to Emmaus and the Lord overtook them and saluted them kindly, inquiring why they were of such sad countenances and evidently in deep sorrow. They knew him not, they saw not the print of the nails in his hands nor in his feet, they saw not the features they had long known nor the clothing. They said to him, "Art thou a stranger in these parts and hast not heard about Jesus?" etc. He took occasion to open unto them the Scriptures, to point out to them from the prophecies how it was necessary that Messiah

should thus suffer in order to enter into his glory, in order that his Kingdom might come, in order that mankind might be blessed, in order that an elect Church might be gathered to be associated with him in the blessing of the world.

Finally, after being with them probably for several hours, and doubtless being esteemed a very wonderful man indeed, who could thus open up the Scriptures so as to cause their hearts to burn within them with love and devotion and with faith, he revealed himself to them in the breaking of bread and immediately vanished. Something about his words or about his manner of giving thanks told them at once that this was their Lord, and accounted for all the peculiar phenomena they had noted.

The same evening he met with his assembled disciples, who, in fear of the Jews, behind fast-closed doors, were discussing their own safety and also the reports of Mary and the other women at the sepulcher when Jesus appeared suddenly in their midst. They were astounded and fearful. How could any being get into their midst while the doors were fast? Surely the being before them must be a spirit. They were in fear and trepidation, but the Master's words, "Peace," stilled their fears. He showed them his hands and his side, and he ate before them and said, "Handle me and see that it is I: a spirit [*pneuma*] hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Then were they glad as they realized the truth, and so are all glad who realize this great fact of our Lord's resurrection from the dead and who have any conception whatever of its weighty importance as connected with the divine plan for our salvation.

WHY THE DIFFERENT FORMS?

We may be sure that there was some good and wise purpose served by the Lord's course--by his appearing in various forms and later on vanishing from sight. Nothing, we may be sure, was done in vain; everything had a purpose, especially at such a time. It is for us to reverently examine the matter and note the purpose, the object, of such manifestations. We accept them as follows: (1) Our Lord would convince them that he was not any longer the fleshly Jesus whom they had known for several years; he would convince them that although put to death in the flesh he was quickened in the spirit, that henceforth he was a spirit being. They knew about angels--Mary herself had seen two in the sepulcher; they knew that angels could appear and disappear; they knew that angels could assume human form and flesh; they knew from the record that angels had appeared to Abraham and had eaten dinner with him, and that Abraham knew not that they were angels until subsequently.

Our Lord would show his disciples that not only was he not dead, but that now he could go and come like

the angels, he could appear and disappear, he could manifest himself in the flesh or be present without flesh, he could create clothing as easily as the flesh for these appearances and did so, yet none of the clothing and none of the flesh were the same that they had previously been in contact with. The clothing was with the soldiers still--the flesh, we know not where it is; we simply know that Jesus was not raised in the flesh, and we know also that the elements of the fleshly body are not at all necessary to God for the creation of a spirit body.

Our Lord illustrated in his own person the very lesson he had given them on the occasion of the visit of Nicodemus. He then said that those born of the spirit could go and come like the wind, and that none would know whence they came nor whither they went. How appropriate that he should illustrate this and thus give them their first lessons in spiritual things, which, however, they would not be fully able to appreciate until after Pentecost, when the holy Spirit would be poured out.

"A SPIRIT HATH NOT FLESH"

But some, perhaps, may say, Did not Jesus contradict the thought that he was a spirit when he used the words, A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have? The two thoughts are quite in harmony: they were not seeing the spirit Jesus, they were merely seeing the flesh and bones which the spirit Jesus assumed for the purpose of conversing with them, just as the angels assumed flesh-and-bone bodies when they made certain communications as recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. He did not say, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see I am," but "as ye see me have."

The spirit Jesus manifested himself through the flesh and bones and clothing. He saw that, if they could but realize that they were looking at flesh and bones their fear would depart, and as they would be thus calmed, Jesus would be the better able to explain to them the fact of his resurrection and to give them the initiatory lessons connected with their future work as his representatives in the world when he should be gone. This was the object of his various manifestations during those forty days, about eleven in all, and very brief in every case. The appearing in the flesh would remove their fear and enable them to hear the better what he had to say to them. Their seeing him on two occasions in a body of flesh resembling the one he had been crucified in, and perhaps in clothing resembling that the soldiers had divided among themselves, assisted them also to grasp the thought of the resurrection, that he was no longer dead; and his appearing in different forms proved to them conclusively that none of these forms was his own proper one, but that they were merely so many

appearances through which he communicated with them.

Doubtless it was for this same reason that he remained forty days, manifesting himself occasionally, yet invisible to them all the remainder of that period. He would have them learn gradually not to expect him again in the flesh, but to realize, nevertheless, his presence with them and care over them, so that they might the better understand, when he should leave them, how he could still maintain his presence with them and his guardianship of all their interests. He was sending them forth as his special representatives in the world as his words indicated, "Peace be unto you. As the Father hath sent me even so send I you." Jesus Christ was the Father's representative; we are the special representatives of our Lord and Head, though of course through him and in him representatives also of the Father.

"RECEIVE YE THE HOLY SPIRIT"

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.

"WHOSESOEVER SINS YE REMIT"

Our Lord's declaration that his disciples might or might not remit sins is not to be understood after the manner in vogue amongst Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, etc.--that a priest, by virtue of the sacrifice of the mass or otherwise, is able to remit sins. The thought rather is that these twelve apostles in particular, and less particularly all the Lord's true members while in the world, would be under the influence and guidance and instruction of his holy Spirit to such an extent that they would know the terms and conditions on which it would be possible to forgive sins, and that they might thus know so certainly as to be able to tell their hearers whether or not their sins were forgiven by the Lord.

We have this privilege still, and every true child of God should know how to exercise it, so that if brought into contact with penitent sinners he could render them the necessary assistance and indicate to them upon what particular terms they might know that their sins were forgiven of the Lord. For instance, we may assure any one who gives evidence of contrition, of heart repentance, restitution to the extent of ability, faith in Christ and obedient desire to walk according to his ways--we may assure any such person that his sins are forgiven; not that we have the power to forgive them, but we, being intimate with the Master and knowing his mind on the subject, can speak for him as his mouthpiece, to declare the terms of reconciliation. Whoever can know about his own sins, should know also how to direct and assist others in knowing of the cancellation of their sins.

Z '99, 132 – 137; R2476

NOW IS CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

--JUNE 11.--*JOHN 20:11-20; 1 COR. 15:20.*—

UNDER divine supervision most elaborate proofs are furnished us of the death of Jesus--even tho the disciples and friends saw no necessity for this particularity, and indeed would have regarded all such proofs of his death as so many contradictions of their hopes and so many proofs of their disappointment. But the death of Christ was an all-important event, and hence it was necessary, from the divine standpoint, that the proofs respecting it

should be indubitable. Let us note some of these proofs:--

(1) His side was pierced with a spear, and from the wound flowed blood and water--a positive proof that death, dissolution, had taken place.--*Jno. 19:34,35.*

(2) The centurion who had charge of the execution undoubtedly was a man of large experience in such matters,. And the record is that he was convinced of our Lord's death, and so reported to Pilate, the governor. --*Mark 15:39,44,45.*

(3) The corpse was buried in Joseph's *new* tomb, which contained no other corpses, and hence there could be no question respecting the body of Christ and its burial.

(4) The chief priests, anxious to prevent any spread of the doctrine of Jesus, remembered his words respecting his resurrection; and, while they placed no confidence in the matter, judging Jesus' disciples by themselves they surmised that they would be tricky and attempt to steal away the corpse and to claim the resurrection of their Master in harmony with his previous declarations. As a precaution against thus they requested Pilate to seal the tomb and place a guard of Roman soldiers there; but Pilate refused to act officially in the matter, nevertheless giving them, as was probably customary, the privilege of hiring some of the soldiers as watchmen--much the same as anyone to-day can employ and pay a policeman for extra service as a watchman; thus the Pharisees appointed the watch and sealed the stone, and had full cognizance of Jesus' resurrection. --**Matt. 27:62-66.**

(5) The friends of Jesus were fully convinced of his death, and wrapped his body in linen clothes, with spices. (**John 19:40.**) Apparently his declaration that he would rise from the dead on the third day was not appreciated by his followers until after he had risen. Their minds were intent upon the promise of the Kingdom; they were amazed at his arrest, conviction and crucifixion, and, it would seem, forgot for the time many of his precious words. Indeed, we are to remember that our Lord's teachings were almost wholly in parables and dark sayings, and they may have misinterpreted his reference to a resurrection. (**Mark 4:13.**) After his resurrection they remembered his words, and particularly after Pentecost--after they had received the holy Spirit, which, according to promise, brought to their memories the things which he had spoken unto them while he was with them.--**John 14:26.**

If it were well that the facts respecting our Lord's death should be clearly set forth as a part of the Gospel, it is well also that all of the Lord's people should fully recognize the fact of this death, and the necessity of it, and its value as the offset or corresponding price for the redemption of Adam, and indirectly the redemption of all those who were in Adam when the sentence of death came upon him,--all redeemed by the one sacrifice, offered once for all. Strange to say, very many Christian people speak of our Lord's death and of his resurrection, and yet really do not believe in either. To believe that our Lord arose from the dead on the third day is to believe that *he was dead* from the time of his crucifixion on Friday afternoon until the time of his resuscitation or resurrection, early on Sunday morning, the first day of the week. And if he "*was dead*" (**Rev. 2:8**) during that

period (parts of three days) and did not rise from the dead until the morning of the third day, it means that our Lord Jesus was *not in any sense alive* during the interim, a period of about thirty-eight hours. It seems strange that it should be necessary to emphasize a point so emphatically and repeatedly set forth in the Scriptures. The necessity is twofold:--

(1) Because, through a false, unscriptural theory, many Christian people hold that there is no such thing as death;--that what appears to be death is merely a transformation to a larger degree of life;--that the real being cannot die, and that merely the body dies, and that so our Lord Jesus *did not die* for our sins, but merely shed off an outer covering of flesh.

(2) It is important to the true Christian's faith that the fact of our Lord's death be not only fully established by the statements of the Scriptures, but that the Christian's faith therein be fully and thoroughly grounded; because only those who realize that our Lord's death was for the time an extinction of his being can realize how his death was the payment of father Adam's penalty. Father Adam's penalty was death, extinction, and this penalty fell by inheritance upon all his posterity; "Christ *died* for our sins"--he suffered the death penalty for father Adam (and incidentally for all those who had come under the death sentence through Adam's transgression).

Nor should it be understood that the penalty upon father Adam was an extinction of life for merely thirty-eight hours: it was perpetual, the everlasting extinction of life and all the privileges of life he had received from his Creator. Our Lord's sacrifice--the death of the man Christ Jesus--was an everlasting death also, a death which fully off-set the penalty upon father Adam, and as Adam's *substitute* the *man Jesus* could never be released. The release of the *man Jesus* from the death penalty would be as impossible as the release of Adam himself without a substitute: for, as man's substitute, "*the man* Christ Jesus" took upon himself the entire penalty of Adam's transgression, and must bear to the full the death-curse which rested upon Adam and indirectly upon his race. Hence, faith grasps firmly the thought that our Lord Jesus did not take back man's ransom-price--did not take back the sacrifice for sins, the human nature--in his resurrection.

In order that he might offer this, the only proper and acceptable ransom for man, our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father, left the higher nature, and was "made flesh," "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (**John 1:14; Heb. 2:9.**) If he could pay man's penalty by remaining dead thirty-eight hours, then man could have paid his own penalty by remaining dead thirty-eight hours, and there would have been no necessity for a sin-offering, a ransom-price, to be paid. Indeed, Adam would have

overpaid his penalty thousands of times. But since the penalty was death in the absolute sense, unlimited by time; and since this penalty would never permit a restoration of life to Adam, therefore it was necessary that a *ransom* should be paid for Adam;--that another life should be *substituted* for Adam's life;--that another, a perfect man, should die and *remain dead everlastingly*, that Adam and the race condemned in him might be released from death by a resurrection.

It was just this work, in harmony with the divine plan, that was accomplished by the man Christ Jesus, and finished in his death; and according to divine promise that ransom-sacrifice will never be abrogated, will never be taken back: and consequently all who are trusting in the merit of the great sacrifice of atonement may have full confidence that there will be a resurrection of the dead (of humanity), both of the just and the unjust; because Justice has been paid the full price, and because God has promised through the Gospel of Christ an opportunity for return to everlasting life, which shall eventually be offered to every member of Adam's race.--**1 Tim. 2:6.**

In view of these facts, how and why do we speak of the resurrection of Jesus as essential to man's salvation? We answer that neither we nor the Scriptures speak of the resurrection of Christ Jesus as a *man*. His coming to our low estate of manhood was merely for the purpose of effecting our ransom, and as the taking back of manhood by a resurrection would undo the entire work of redemption, it is preposterous to think of our Lord's resurrection as a restoration to human nature.

Quite to the contrary, all the evidences of the Scriptures, rightly and carefully arranged before our minds, show conclusively that our Lord was resurrected a spirit-being--not only higher than man, but higher also than angels, archangels, principalities and powers, a partaker of the divine nature. As such he was indeed a "new creature," and not in any sense of the word did this imply his taking back our ransom price. The Scriptures declare that he was "put to death in the *flesh*, but quickened in the *spirit*"--a spirit-being and the Apostle Paul declares our Lord's resurrection of the Church which is his body. (**Rom. 6:5.**) He declared that we with him will constitute the first (chief) resurrection; and then he explains our resurrection, and that explanation, therefore, must be equally an explanation of our Lord's resurrection, for he is the Head, the Firstborn from the dead amongst many brethren: and the experience of the "brethren" in resurrection will only be a duplication of the experiences of their Lord. With this in mind, let us note the Apostle's statement respecting the first resurrection and its operation upon the Church, assured that the same description, in general features at least, apply to our Lords; resurrection. He says, "Thus

is *the* resurrection of *the* dead: It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: 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."--**1 Cor. 15:42-44; Phil. 3:10,11.**

From this standpoint, and from no other, can the facts related in the Scriptures respecting our Lord's resurrection be harmonized with each other and with the object for which he came into the world and suffered death.

Our Lord's resurrected being was a direct gift from the Father, and not something which our Redeemer held over from a previous existence. When he left the glory of the spiritual condition and became the man Jesus, he had a *right to life*, under the divine law, because he had always fulfilled the conditions of life. In harmony with this the Scriptures assure us that his degradation from a higher nature to the human nature was not as a punishment, but of his own volition; not in obedience to a command of the Father, but in obedience to the will of the Father. As a man also he had a right to life, because the divine law guaranteed life to all who obeyed it; hence in no sense of the word was his human life forfeited. On the contrary, he *gave* it, he *sacrificed* it, he *offered* it, in harmony with the Father's plan, as man's *ransom-price*. But there he *lost* all right to life: that was the very thing which he surrendered or "offered" on man's behalf. And having surrendered on man's behalf his rights to life he had no such rights remaining, and consequently could plead no right to a future life by a resurrection or that score--he had given his rights for Adam and his race.

But while the rights of our Lord were gone--paid to Justice as Adam's ransom, nevertheless the heavenly Father's power and right to re-create on a higher plane were in no sense of the word abridged. Justice might properly object to the re-creation of Jesus as a *man*, but would have no ground whatever for objecting to the creation of a new creature--of a nature higher and superior to all others of God's creatures--of the divine nature. And this is that the Apostle tells us did occur; after describing our Lords; humility and obedience to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross, the Apostle declares, "God hath highly *exalted* him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."--**Phil. 2:9-11.**

While it doth not yet appear what we shall be, when we are changed by a share in the first resurrection to the same divine nature, and while consequently it does not yet appear to us clearly what our Lord is in his very high exaltation, we can nevertheless appreciate the fact that amongst all who are honored with the title of sons of God upon the different planes or natures there is a measure of identity. Thus, for instance, our

Lord, in his prehuman condition as Michael, the Logos, could be transferred to a lower condition, the human, and yet could preserve a good recollection and appreciation of his previous experiences, and did so, as the Scriptures relate. (John 8:58; 17:5,24.) And similarly it was possible for the perfect man Jesus, the image of God in flesh, to be so duplicated as a still higher image of God in the divine nature, "the express image of the Father's person," that his identity is absolutely assured. The Scriptures clearly indicate that our Lords; experiences as a man, and the lessons of patience and obedience and sympathy which he then learned, are present with him now as experiences, altho no longer flesh, but spirit of the highest order. Only from this standpoint can we rightly appreciate the various facts set forth in this lesson.

Woman's love and tenderness, specially endearing charms of the sex, are well illustrated in this lesson--in the coming of Jesus' female friends "very early in the morning," "while it was yet dark," and the "dawn." They came with no thought of the Lord's resurrection, but to embalm his body more elaborately than there had been time and opportunity for doing on the evening of his burial. They ad bee hindered from coming the previous day, because it was the Jewish Sabbath (the day now known as Saturday), the seventh day of the week. It does not appear that they all came together, but rather that Mary Magdalene was the first to arrive; but before her arrival there had been an earthquake, the keepers were affrighted, and fled to the chief priests. (**Matt. 28:2,11-15.**) Mary's perplexity respecting the events connected with the crucifixion was evidently intensified by the finding of the stone rolled away from the sepulcher, and full of the thought that the Lord's enemies were still pursuing him, and had even removed his body, she ran with haste to make the matter known to Peter and John, saying, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him." Meantime the other women arrived, and saw the two angels, who explained to them that Jesus had risen as he had foretold, and they also returned to the city to report to the apostles. --**Luke 24:2-10.**

Peter and John were immediately interested by Mary's narrative, and hastened to the sepulcher; John, the younger and more active one, arriving there first, looked in and saw the place vacant, and the linen clothes lying; but Peter, the courageous, coming up, was the first to enter the sepulcher. Now they began to think of his words which our Lord had spoken respecting his resurrection to the third day, and John tells us of himself that looking at these evidences "he believed"--yet no doubt with much confusion of thought at first. The two disciples went to their home, but Mary remained at the sepulcher, weeping, and looking in she saw what Peter and John had not seen--

two angels. They were doubtless there when Peter and John went into the sepulcher, but as we have heretofore seen from the Scriptural testimony, angels are invisible to human sight, except as a miracle may be performed. Such a miracle was performed in this instance, and the two angels assumed human form and white raiment, and asked Mary why she wept. While she told them that she was weeping because some one had taken away the Lord's corpse, she heard as a footstep near her, and turning saw what she took to be the gardener, the keeper of Joseph's garden in which this tomb was. She did not recognize him as the Lord, but asked him if he had removed the body to tell her where, that she might take charge of it--her thought seeming to have been that Joseph was unwilling to have his tomb cumbered longer, and had therefore ordered that our Lord's body be removed, and that probably the gardener had attended to the matter.

It will be noticed in this case, and in the various instances of our Lord's appearances after his resurrection, that his nearest and dearest friends did not recognize him. He appeared in various forms and under varying circumstances. He spoke to them only briefly on each occasion, and during the forty days of his presence from the time of his resurrection to the time of his ascension was seen of his disciples only as a few times, and all of his conversations together probably did not occupy over an hour. These appearances, nevertheless, were for the purpose of teaching them very important lessons. (1) They were to recognize the fact that he was no longer dead, but alive. (2) That he was no longer the *man* Jesus, and subject to *human* limitations as before his crucifixion, but with the same loving disposition and characteristics was to as a "new creature," not subject to earthly conditions and limitations --able, as the angels, to appear and to disappear, to go and come like the wind, as he himself had explained that all "born of the spirit" in resurrection can do.--**John 3:8.**

In this view of the matter 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. Nevertheless, he must tell her that she was neglecting a great privilege and as a great duty, for under divine providence it had fallen to her to be the first to announce to the disciples

positively that the Lord was alive again. Instead of holding the Lord tightly by the feet, and thinking never to leave him, she should rather gladly become the servant both of the Lord and the apostles, and carry the good tidings.

And this in substance is what our Lord said to her. Our common translation "Touch me not," is faulty: the passage should rather be rendered,--Cling not to me, but go to my brethren, and say to them that I have not ascended to my Father, but that I am to ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God. Announce to them the fact of my resurrection, and that I will be with them awhile before I go to the Father: thus you will do as a work of preparing them for my subsequent manifestations. And having the true love which manifests itself in obedience, Mary immediately undertook the mission assigned her. According to *Matthew's account (28:1,9)* "the other Mary" must have been near by, and have come forward by this time, and received as a commission with Mary Magdalene to tell the disciples.

We will not stop to call special attention to the words of our Lord, in which he declares that our heavenly Father is his heavenly Father, and our God his God, for the expression is simple enough for all unprejudiced minds. We pass on to notice that the second appearance of our Lord was in the afternoon of the same day, toward evening, when he overtook two of the disciples going to Emmaus, as a suburban village: one of these was Cleopas, and the other evidently was Simon Peter.--*Luke 24:13-32,34.*

The third appearance was in the evening of the same day. While Simon and Cleopas (who immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples) were relating their experiences Jesus himself appeared in their midst. The disciples were nervous from the experiences of the preceding days, and were fearful of what the rulers of the Jews would do against them as the followers of Jesus, and were together in conference, "the doors being shut,"--barred and bolted, we may reasonably suppose. What could be more astonishing to them than that as a stranger should appear in their midst? And altho he said, "Peace be unto you," no wonder they were affrighted. They thought of this as the manifestation of an angel in their midst, for who but as a spirit being could appear while the doors were shut? They had not yet learned the lesson that our Lord, in his resurrection, was a spirit being and no longer a human being, and that like the angels he now had power to appear and disappear--to assume a human body with clothing, etc., and to dissipate the same at will. This lesson they must learn, and must needs be taught it by practical illustrations. Simon, who had been at Emmaus, and who had noted how the Lord vanished out of their sight as soon as they recognized him, would undoubtedly be prepared,

better than the others, for this miraculous appearance while the doors were shut. He would know that he one who could disappear and vanish out of their sight at Emmaus would similarly have power to appear in any place.

Our Lord's interview was not a lengthy one; it was a first lesson, and the disciple would get the more good of it by reflection after he would leave them. He wished them, however, to be at ease in his presence, and to now that they were not *seeing* a spirit being, for, as he explained, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones." What they *saw* was not spirit, but matter. This does not mean that our Lord was not a spirit being at this time, as is clearly set forth by other Scriptures (*1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17; Phil. 3:21*): it merely means what it says, namely, that what they *saw* was not spirit, and hence that they had no cause for affright.

In our Lord's appearance to the Marys and on the way to Emmaus there is no suggestion that he appeared in a body scarred with the marks of the nails. Can we suppose that Mary would have clasped him by the feet and not have noticed the great wounds made by the nails? Can we suppose that the two going to Emmaus, and looking curiously at their companion, asking hi, if he were a stranger to those parts, would to have noticed if his hands and his feet had great wounds in them? The evidence, therefore, seems conclusive that in neither of these manifestations did our Lord appear in bodies bearing wounds and thus resembling his crucified form. But now, at this third showing wishing to emphasize the identity of his risen self with the crucified one, he appeared to his followers in a form exactly like the one that was crucified, and showed them the sparmarks in his side and the nail-prints in his hands and feet. And while they still wondered and feared that what they saw was merely an apparition, he asked them to give him food, and ate some fish and honeycomb in their sight.--*Luke 24:39-43.*

Nothing in this implies of necessity that the flesh which they saw was the identical flesh which had hung on the cross. On the contrary that flesh, like all other flesh, was subject to the laws of nature and could not have been brought into the room while the doors were shut, nor subsequently caused to vanish out of it. The body of flesh which our Lord displayed to the disciples, was evidently created, and its clothing as well, in their presence, and dissolved when he vanished from their sight after the interview. Such powers are beyond human comprehension, but quite within the range of divine power.

What became of the body of flesh that was crucified, and that laid in Joseph's tomb, and that disappeared therefrom, we are not told, except that the Apostle and Prophet declare that, "His flesh saw no corruption." (*Acts 2:31; Psalms. 16:10.*) We incline to the opinion that

the flesh, which was man's ransom-price, will never see corruption, but that it will be preserved by divine power as an everlasting testimony of the grace of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ in man's redemption, and will thus be a witness and a testimony to the divine love throughout eternity. Where God may have that body in preservation we know not. He who could hide the body of Moses, who was only a type, surely could hide the body of his Son--the antitypical redemption price. — **Jude 9.**

These various appearances of our Lord under peculiar circumstances were continued at long intervals during the forty days. Apparently he appeared in all some four or five times after the appearance above noted, which were on the day of his resurrection, and the Apostle Paul assures us that at the time he wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians over two hundred and fifty witnesses of our Lord's resurrection were still living, and this epistle was written about twenty-four years after the crucifixion. When we remember how close a reasoner the Apostle Paul was, and how logical were all his conclusions, we may rest assured that he did not receive this testimony respecting our Lord's resurrection upon any slight evidence, but had full confirmation of it. Moreover, he attests as a witness to the resurrection himself, saying, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born before due time."--**1 Cor. 15:6-8.**

The Apostle Paul did not see Jesus under a veil of flesh, as he appeared to the others before the spirit dispensation began. To Paul he manifested himself in the glory of this spirit being, "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday." The effect, as is well known, was disastrous to the eyes of the Apostle, because, altho he saw the Lord *as* one born before the

time, yet not having been thus born himself by a resurrection change to the newness of nature, the sight was a calamity to his flesh.

It surely is a great relief to us to understand correctly respecting our dear Redeemer's resurrection, for several reasons:--

(1) It permits us to see how he arose without taking back our ransom price.

(2) It shows us that, altho, in obedience to the Father's arrangement, he willingly and gladly left a higher condition in order to be made flesh and to give a ransom, nevertheless he has not been permitted to be a loser to all eternity by this arrangement--he is not hampered by the lower or fleshly organism, but has, in his resurrection, attained to the highest form of spirit nature, the divine nature.

(3) It is a comfort to us to know that he does not bear now, in glory, the scars of the thorns, the spear and the nails; nor any of the evidences of the things which he suffered on our behalf: but instead his is an "excellent glory"--"the express image of the Father's person."--**Heb. 1:3.**

(4) It comforts us also to know that the Church, the body of Christ, will not to all eternity bear the marks of imperfection, the blemishes of sin, nor the marks of the wounds endured for righteousness' sake. No, the promise to the Church is the same as the promise to her Lord, that in the resurrection the Father will give (not the body that died, with wounds and imperfections, but) "a body as it hath pleased him," a glorious body, a likeness of the Lord. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he *is*"--not as he *was*.-- **1 Cor. 15:38; Phil 3:21; 1 John 3:2.**

Z '99, 137 – 142; R2479

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

--JUNE 18.--**COL. 3:1-15.**--

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

FOLLOWING our consideration of our Lord's death and resurrection, it is appropriate that we apply to ourselves the two-fold lesson therein taught:--

(1) The lesson of man's depravity through the fall and his consequent need of a redemption and restitution. As we have seen, the death of Christ was man's ransom-price, and the resurrection of Christ was God's attestation of the acceptableness of the sin-offering, and preparing of the way for the blessing of mankind by raising up to superhuman life, divine glory

and power, the Redeemer,--constituting him "Lord of all," and thus fitting him for the great work of blessing Adam and his family in due time--after the establishment of his Millennial Kingdom.

(2) We should note God's purpose to select from mankind a "little flock" on whom to confer Kingdom power in due time, making them his representatives and agents in the work of blessing the world of mankind with all the favors secured by the ransom sacrifice. The Scriptures show us that this plan or purpose of God was foreknown, forearranged, by him

before the foundation of the world. They show us also that in the divine purpose our Lord Jesus was the Head, the First, the principal One, the Lord of this little flock, and that God's dealings with him and the method by which he was prepared for his present high position were an illustration of the method by which his Church is to be prepared for joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.--*Eph. 1:3,4, 4:15; Col. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:20.*

It is with this latter feature or lesson that we now have to do. In the Scripture under consideration the Apostle is addressing, nor mankind in general,--not even believers in general,--but a specific class, namely, "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ." (*Col. 1:2.*) He is addressing, therefore, those who have taken the two steps of grace:--(1) The step of justification from Adamic sin and death to reconciliation with the Father through faith in the atonement accomplished by his dear Son. (2) Having thus been justified reckonedly, or by faith, lifted out of the condition of sin and condemnation, these, according to the Lords; invitation, have *consecrated* themselves in the fullest sense and degree to the Lord for obedience and service "even unto death."

This full consecration of every talent and power and opportunity is Scripturally called death--because the will has died, self-will has gone, and the Lord's will has been accepted in its stead. And since the will is the real *ego*, the real person, the thought is that the old *ego*, will or person has died, and that the new creature, having no will of his own, but being wholly under subjection to the divine will as expressed in Christ, who is the Head of this body, has come into control. Let us not lose the thought-picture here conveyed. We are not new individuals or persons, for it was individually and personally that we ceased to be when we gave ourselves over by full consecration to the Lord: our new condition is that of members or parts of the larger corporation or body of which our Lord Jesus is the Head. Whoever has a will of his own is properly to be considered an *individual*; but whoever has dropped his own will, and accepted instead of it the will of another, has ceased or figuratively has died as an individual. And this is the picture which the Apostle presents in this and in various other presentations of this subject. For instance, in *1 Corinthians 12* the same writer declares that the entire Christ is not in the members but in the Head. To whatever extent, then, the Lord's people have fully consecrated themselves to him as *members* of the body of Christ, they should be in absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ; and so far as their own wills are concerned they should have none, but in that respect should be "dead."

This is the Apostle's thought in this lesson; but he carries it further, saying that as our own wills,

ambitions, aims and hopes were consecrated and reckoned dead, so we should reckon ourselves as members of the Christ, risen from the dead: new creatures, possessed and controlled by the new will, the mind of Christ. It is this class that the Apostle addresses, and from this standpoint that he declares, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God."

The thought is that all of this class have, as justified earthly beings, desiring and hoping to attain joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom, been taught of God and inspired by the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word to come to this position of self-consecration. We are to note *how* our Lord Jesus laid down his earthly life, and was by the Father exalted to a heavenly condition and the right hand of power, --as a criterion for our course as followers in his footsteps. We are to remember continually that joint-heirship with the Lord in that spiritual condition and in his heavenly power and Kingdom are the hopes set before the Church of this age, and we are to "*seek* those things"--"*seek chiefly the Kingdom of God*"--*seek* to make our calling and election sure to participation with our Lord in the Kingdom honors and glories to which he already has attained as a reward for his faithful sacrifice.--*Verse 1; Matt. 6:33; Rom. 2:7; 2 Pet. 1:10.*

The Apostle wishes us to understand how we are to "*seek*" those things. We are not merely to seek them in prayer, altho prayer is an excellent aid in the seeking. We are to seek them by setting our affections on those things, and by lifting our affections from earthly things.

Comparatively few realize to what extent we have the forming of our own characters--to what extent our minds, our affections, are gardens, in which we may plant either the thorns and thistles of sin, or plant the merely moral and practical qualities corresponding to the useful vegetables, or plant those seeds which will produce the fragrant and beautiful flowers which more particularly would represent the heavenly and spiritual graces. That which a man soweth he shall also reap in kind, whether he sow to the flesh or to the spirit. Whoever, therefore, seeks for the heavenly things, joint-heirship in the Kingdom etc., Must plant or set out in his mind, in his affections, those qualities and grace which the Lord marks out as essential to the development of characters such as will be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." --*Col. 1:12.*

Thus the Lord throws upon all those whom he calls to this "high calling," this "heavenly calling," and who accept the call and covenant thereunder, the responsibility of their success or failure in attaining it. Through his Word he tells of their own natural weaknesses and imperfections, and shows them how

he has provided a full off-set or counterbalance for these imperfections in the merit and sacrifice of the Redeemer: he shows them also what are the fruits and graces of the spirit which they must possess, in heart at least, if they would be joint-heirs with Christ: he shows them also in the Redeemer's life as well as in his teachings the copy which all must follow who would reach the same glorious station and be his joint-heirs. We might look at this matter merely from the standpoint of the responsibility which it throws upon us, and might well feel over-awed thereby; rather, however, we should view it from the standpoint of divine grace, and consider what a blessed privilege has been granted us, not only of being transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we might come more and more to know and to strive for the good, acceptable and perfect will of God, but in addition to all this God has set before us the grandest reward imaginable for the doing of that which is merely our duty and reasonable service--the doing of that which would bring us the largest measure of joy and peace, aside from a future reward.--*2 Pet. 1:3,4.*

There is a natural attraction to earthly things for all mankind: even tho the earthly things, during the reign of evil, be blemished and in many respects distasteful to those who have learned to love righteousness and hate iniquity, there is nevertheless still a strong attraction to the marred and blemished earthly things. Like weeds, earthly affections and desires spring spontaneously from seeds which come we know not whither. The Christian, therefore, who would keep his heart in the love of God must not only keep planting out or setting his affections on heavenly things, but he must keep rooting out the weeds of earthly desire and attraction.

As the Apostle intimates, our new life is not manifest to all, nor upon all occasions; it is a life of new desire, new aims, new aspirations,--which the world can neither see nor fully appreciate, tho it see some outward manifestations of the new life in our daily conduct. Even the "brethren" may not be able to appreciate the progress of the new life in us; and even ourselves may at times be somewhat perplexed respecting the rapidity and strength of its growth, and we may need to look back over weeks or months, or perhaps years, in order to determine unquestionably that it is growing. Our new life, represented by our endeavors to follow the new will of Christ, is *hidden* thus in Christ and in the Father.

It is in harmony with this thought that the Apostle Paul declared in one place that neither the world nor the brethren were capable of judging him--that only the Lord, who could read the heart and know all the conditions and testings and weaknesses to be striven against, could properly judge him. He even declares, "Yea, I judge not mine own self." (*Rom. 14:4; 1 Cor.*

4:3; Jas. 4:12.) It is an excellent plan neither to condemn others who claim to be walking conscientiously as children of the Lord, nor even to condemn ourselves under similar circumstances. We should simply press along day by day, doing the best we can to cultivate the heavenly graces and to serve our Master, leaving all the results with the Lord. He careth for us, and so long as our hopes and aims and objects of life are centered in the heavenly things, and our lives thus hid with Christ in God, we need fear no evil, present or future. For the Lord, will be with us and bless us and keep us from falling and ultimately present us blameless.--*Psa. 23:4; Jude 24; Col. 1:22.*

This condition of things is to last throughout the entire Gospel age, and is to apply to all the members of the body of Christ. All are to be dead to the world and all are to have their ambitions and hopes or life hidden with Christ in God. As the Father has done for our Lord, so he wills of or all those who are truly united to him; and the time for bringing these blessings to the Church is, the Apostle states, at the second coming of the Lord. Then the Lord's people will no longer be misunderstood by each other nor by the world; then the faithful will all appear with the master in glory, and then will begin the work of blessing all the families of the earth with a knowledge of the truth and with an opportunity for full restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

Having thus set forth the proper course of the Church in the line of aspirations, hopes, etc., the Apostle turns to the other side of the question, and gives us particular and explicit directions *how* we should proceed to carry out our consecration vow of deadness to earthly things and life only toward the heavenly things. It will be noticed that he does not counsel retirement from the world and its busy cares to cloisters, monasteries or nunneries, but taking the Lord's consecrated people where they may be, he advises respecting the methods by which they can best accomplish the desired results of mortifying of *deadening* their appetites, desires, etc., which are rooted and grounded in their fallen flesh or earthly nature. He mentions these besetments, commencing with the more gross and ending with the most subtle.

Fornication was very prevalent in the Apostle's day, and he would have the saints recognize this gross, prominent evil, and then in connection with it notice others which they might be much more likely to overlook. First of these in order is "uncleanness." What a searching thought is in that word! It means anything that is not pure, not chaste, not holy not clean. If a good many of the saints might feel that it was useless to mention to them so gross an evil as fornication, they would be forced to admit that in their imperfect condition they required guarding, counseling, on the score of "uncleanness." This

reminds us of our Lord's words to the disciples on the night before his crucifixion. He said to Peter, when proposing to wash his feet, "Ye are clean, but not all." So the saints consecrated to the Lord are clean of heart, pure of heart; yet they are not all clean--the members which touch the earth, their sensibilities and passions which come in contact with the defiled human nature, need cleansing, need "washing with water through the Word." All filth, all uncleanness, every "spot and wrinkle," needs attention, and the "precious blood: is the antidote for every stain.--*Eph. 5:25-27*.

"Inordinate affection" is one of the things mentioned as needing attention and correction but the saints: this signifies earthly or animal passions. The saints are to mortify these, that is, to deaden them--not only to seek not to cultivate, not to enliven, not to arouse, such passions either in themselves or in others, but on the contrary they are to seek to deaden these as well as to cultivate the higher and nobler joys and sentiments. The deadening or mortifying of these, and the self-denial according to the flesh thus implied, is a part of the antitypical *fasting* in which all of the Lord's people should seek to engage, each according to his zeal, opportunities and possibilities.

"Evil concupiscence" (or, in more modern language, *desires for forbidden things*) is a step higher in the Apostle's list of evil tendencies that should be rooted out and mortified, *deadened*. It is not sufficient that we acknowledge sin in its various forms to be evil, and that we resolve that we will strive against it because it is under the Lord's ban: in addition to this we are to root out of our hearts every *longing*, every *desire* for every thing not thoroughly approved by the Lord. Oh, what a cleansing this would mean in the hearts and lives, and especially in the thoughts, of many who have named the name of Christ! Many who fail to note this point, who fail to follow the Apostle's admonition, find themselves continually beset by temptations, because, while outwardly avoiding gross immoralities, they secretly harbor sympathies for things condemned,--*desiring* that they might have them, if only they were not forbidden. Under such conditions comparatively little progress can be made in the higher life. The Apostle would set before us the proper course to be pursued, if we would win the great prize, --namely, the high standard of bringing the very thoughts, wishes, desire, of our hearts into full conformity to the perfect will of God: and only those who do so are properly making progress, running the race set before us in the Gospel.--*2 Cor. 10:5*.

The Apostle concludes his list of things against which the "new creature" must war to the *death* by naming *covetousness*; and declaring it a species of idolatry. In other words, if the hearts of the Lord's people are running after any earthly thing (even if it be

not an evil thing of itself), if they are centering their affections upon even good things of an earthly kind, and are neglecting to set their affections upon the heavenly things, they are failing to run the race successfully. This is amongst the most seductive trials of the Lord's people. Some will set their affections upon a wife or a husband, or upon parents or children, or upon a good name before the public, to such an extent that when testings come as to whether or not they love these more than they love the Lord, their conduct proves that they have given to these *earthly good things* a degree of love beyond that they accorded to the Lord.

Frequently the Lord's people do not at the time realize that this is the case. They love the Lord, and they love their families and friends, and a good name, which is to be preferred to great riches; and they do not realize that they love the Lord less than they love these other things. The Lord, however, will test everyone whom he will receive to the high calling along just these lines; he declares in advance that whoever loves father, mother, children or any other thing more than him is not worthy of him--not worthy to be counted as a member of the body of the Christ in glory, --the overcoming Church. The overcomers must all be proven to be such as would sacrifice every other thing for the Lord; such as would sacrifice the love and fellowship and approval, if necessary, of every other being, in order to retain the love and favor of the Lord. We believe that this test is coming daily closer and closer to the Lord's consecrated people, and it behooves everyone of us to remember that this is one of the elements of our trial, and to set our affections on the heavenly things accordingly, and to mortify or deaden all such affections toward earthly beings and things as would bring these into competition with our Lord in our affections, service, etc.

The Apostle sums up this list of evils to be deadened by saying that it is in the seeking of these earthly things, because of such things growing in their hearts, that the Lord's wrath is to come "on the children of disobedience." Are they the wicked the worldly, the unregenerate? No, none of these; for they are to "children" at all. The reference evidently is to those who have become children of God by his legitimate arrangement of (1) justification and (2) sanctification through faith in Christ. He is referring to those who are of the class "called to be saints," but who fail to make sure their calling and election to jointheirship with the Lord, as members of the kingdom "little flock." He refers to those who do not properly set their affections on heavenly things, but allow their affections to centre chiefly in earthly things. He refers to the "great company" who, because of loving father or mother, houses or lands, or something else, to such an extent that they fail to keep their covenant of sacrifice, will

be accounted unworthy of a share in the Kingdom, and instead will be subjected to the great time of trouble -- "the day of wrath."--*1 Cor. 3:15; Rev. 7:9-15.*

This does not signify, however, that such persons have become exceedingly corrupt in their lives, but merely that they are continuing in the course of life in which they were before making their covenant to the Lord. This is clearly expressed in the *seventh verse* of our lesson.

Coming down to a *particularization* of the change which should take place in those who have consecrated themselves wholly to the Lord, the Apostle enumerates certain alterations of disposition which should be attempted, and, so far as possible, accomplished; namely, the putting away of all the following--anger, wrath, malice, evil-speaking, impurity of language, and falsehood in its every form. At first thought such correction of life might seem to be unnecessary to mention as being too coarse and entirely opposed to every true Christian principle; but as we scrutinize the matter we find that the Apostle has really taken into his list nearly all the weaknesses of the flesh which beset those who have become "new creature in Christ." What is more common with Christian people than to become angry? How many there are who have named the name of Christ who have malicious or at least unkind thoughts respecting others, and who harbor these, and sometimes permit them to influence their conduct! How many there are who indulge in evil speaking, that is, slander (here translated "blasphemy")! This is often done in such a manner as not only to deceive the hearer, but also to deceive the speaker as respects his real intention in speaking of others discreditably, unkindly.

What a wonderful world this would be if all the evil or impure language were avoided! Every Christian should see to it that henceforth every word which proceeds from his mouth shall be such as will minister grace to the hearers--such words as will only good and be edifying. Finally, how much need there is, not only of having good intentions in the heart, but also of expressing those good intentions truthfully one to another--without deception, without hypocrisy. But it requires that a heart be very pure and very full of love if it would be very truthful, otherwise it would lead into trouble continually. If the unloving, ungenerous, unkind hearts, full of evil surmising, malice, hatred and strife, were to express themselves frankly it would add immensely to the trouble of the world. The Apostle therefore urges first, the purifying of the heart, and then general candor.

These corrections of life are urged as the reasonable and proper outcome of our transformation from the Adamic and fallen nature, reckoned dead, to the new nature of Christ, of whose "body" we have become

reckonedly members, controlled and renewed in knowledge through our new Head, Christ Jesus.

And the Apostle then shows that in this new condition, as members of the body of Christ, we are to remember that previous differences of man are ignored, for whoever is accepted of the Lord as a member of his body is a fellow-member with every other member thus accepted,--whether, according to the flesh, they were Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian or Scythian, bondman or freeman; because all who come into Christ are reckoned *dead* to their previous condition, and alive to the new conditions which are life for all. Thus, a slave being set free is dead to his former slavery, and may figuratively be said to have started on a new life. Thus also a citizen may renounce his allegiance to the land of his birth and may swear allegiance to another country, and become a citizen of it, and thus be reckoned as dead to the nation of which he was a citizen by birth, and to have become alive as a citizen of the new nation to which he has been adopted. Thus it is with all those who are in Christ: they may have been Welshman or Spaniards, Britons or Gauls, blacks or whites, Indians or Malays, but as soon as they are accepted of the Lord as new creature through faith and consecration they are to reckon themselves *dead* to all their former relationships and obligations, and as having come into new conditions as citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom, and reckonedly heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

This does not mean, however, that the white man will become a black man, nor the black man a white man; it does not mean, necessarily, a change of language either, nor a revolution in all the tastes and peculiarities wherewith one was born; nor does it mean a full release, according to the flesh, from obligations to the land of our birth, nor imply that we should not be subject to the powers that be, except as their demands might conflict with the positive commands of our King; nor does it imply an ignoring of the differences of sex and the proprieties which belong to each sex, and which, according to the Scriptures, are to be continued and preserved during this age. It does imply, however, that in thinking of each other as *new creatures* in Christ Jesus. All are to be considered as on a common plane or level--none are to be disesteemed as "brethren" because of color, speech or sex.

With this thought before our minds,--of the oneness and equality of those who have been accepted into the body of Christ, the Apostle urges upon our attention the necessity, not only of putting off the evil dispositions of our fallen flesh, but the necessity also of putting on, cultivating, the various graces of the Spirit exemplified in our Head, Christ Jesus. He specifies these: (1) Bowels of mercies, or, in more

modern language, *compassionate sentiments*; a disposition toward largeness and generosity of heart toward everybody and everything--toward the saints, toward our neighbors and friends and relatives, toward our enemies, and toward the brute creation. Amplifying, he continues, showing that it would imply (2) kindness toward all; (3) humbleness of mind, the reverse of boastfulness, headiness, arrogance; (4) meekness, or gentleness of disposition; (5) long-suffering, or patient endurance with the faults and weaknesses of others. It implies that we should bear with each other's peculiarities of temperament and disposition, freely forgiving one another, if there be cause of offence found in each other--learning the meanwhile to correct ourselves, as we see our own blemishes more or less mirrored in others. Ad the standard for all this course of conduct is found in the Lord's course toward us, for he surely has been generous, kind, forbearing and forgiving.

The Apostle wishes us to notice that he is not attempting a reformation of the world along these lines, but merely a transformation of those how have entered into a special covenant with the Lord, namely, the Church: "the elect of God, holy and beloved." Nevertheless, all who are thus covenanted to the Lord, and hope to make their calling and election sure to membership in the glorified Church, will not only seek to have these fruits of the spirit in their own lives, but will seek also to cultivate the same as they may have opportunity in their friends and neighbors: above all will such seek to exercise such a good influence upon their own families--that as their children receive from them, as parents, the natural life and the necessary instructions and start therein, they may also if possible receive from them their start in the new life, and the necessary instructions and equipment for the same.]

But the Apostle, as the mouthpiece of the holy Spirit, is a thorough instructor: not only does he tell us

what *dis-graces* to put off and what *graces* to put on, but viewing the Lord's body arrayed in these glorious qualities of heart--compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patient endurance, forbearance and forgiveness, -he adds, "And *above* all these put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is thus pictured as the "girdle" which binds and holds in place the folds of the robe of Christ's righteousness, with its various graces. In other words, the Apostle would have us see that forbearance, meekness, patience, etc., must not be matters of courtesy merely, or matters of policy merely, but however much they might partake of these qualities at the beginning, the wearers will not be perfected in heart, not be fit of the kingdom, until they have reached the place where these various graces of their wills, or intentions, are bound to them by the cords of love--love for the Lord, love for righteousness, love for the "brethren," and sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation. Love is indeed the bond of perfectness, the very spirit of the Lord.

How forceful in its place is the last verse of this lesson, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body [one corporation, one Church--the body of Christ], and be ye thankful." Not until God's people have reached some measure of what the Apostle has here outlined can they know experimentally the blessedness of having divine peace *rule* in their hearts and lives, controlling their relationship with every member of the body of Christ under the bond of love, and producing more and more in them the spirit of gratitude and thankfulness to God, for mercies and blessings enjoyed. And such gratitude will find its natural and proper outlet in endeavors to serve the Lord: endeavors which the Lord will be sure to accept from such hearts, reckoned holy and acceptable through Christ Jesus, the head and Redeemer.

=====

Z '08, 154 – 159; R4174

HE THAT LIVETH AND WAS DEAD

--JOHN 20:1-18.--MAY 31.--

Golden Text:--"I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore."--Rev. 1:18.

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, "Because I live ye shall live also." (*John 14:19.*) A proper appreciation of this subject assists materially in straightening out various theological kinks which have troubled the Lord's people for centuries.

(1) We must have the proper thought; that our Lord really died, that there was no sham about it, that he

was not, as some erroneously suppose, more alive than ever while apparently dead. Our Golden Text expresses this thought in our Lord's own words, "I am he that liveth and was dead." He was dead in the same sense exactly that Adam was dead, for he died as Adam's substitute, to take his place under the divine sentence or curse of original sin, thus to make possible the release of Adam and all of his posterity from that sentence. As Jesus did not in death go to a place of eternal torment, neither did Adam go to a place of torment, nor was anything of the kind implied in the sentence upon him, all the creeds of Christendom to the contrary notwithstanding. Let God be true though it make every creed a lie!

"HE DESCENDED INTO HELL"

This expression is found in the so-called Apostles' Creed. It is in full accord with the statement of the Prophet David, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *sheol*" [the tomb, translated thirty-one times hell and thirty-one times grave and three times pit]. The Apostle Peter confirms the same, quoting the Psalmist's words in the Greek; he says, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hades*" [the grave, the tomb, the state of death]. And the same Apostle, speaking under the inspiration of Pentecost, on the subject of our Lord's resurrection tells us that the Prophet David spake not these words respecting himself, that they were not true of him, that his soul was left in *sheol*, in *hades*, and that his flesh did see corruption. St. Peter says of David, "His sepulchre is with us until this day." It would not be his sepulchre if he had risen. The Apostle says these words were spoken of our Lord; that his soul, being, was not left in the tomb; that he was raised from the dead on the third day. There is no excuse for the confusion usually presented to the minds of inquirers on this subject by their teachers. The Scriptures are plain enough in their declaration that the Lord was dead, not alive. To prevent any misunderstanding they make very plain that not merely was our Lord's body dead, but his soul was dead; as we read, "He poured out his soul unto death," "He made his soul an offering for sin"; and again, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." (*Isa. 53:10-12.*) And again in the text above examined, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," in *sheol*, in *hades*, the tomb, the state of death. To suppose anything else than that our Lord was actually dead would be to suppose that Calvary was all a mockery, a farce, and that our Lord as a spirit being stepped out of the mortal body and deceived his executioners, allowing them to suppose that they killed him, while he was more alive than ever. Scriptural declarations are quite to the contrary of this, and we must stand fast by the Word of God to avoid confusion. During the "dark ages" the theory was foisted upon the Church that a man appearing to die

did not do so, but became more alive than ever. Upon this false premise various delusive errors have been built-- Spiritism, Theosophy, Purgatory, means for deliverance from Purgatory, praying for the dead, etc., etc.

All scholars are aware of the truth of what we here set forth, but few of them are willing to undertake to combat the error which has become so firmly lodged in the human mind, fearing the loss of influence, honor amongst men and salary. As an illustration of what we say we call attention to a pocket-card bearing the impress of the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1319 Walnut St., Philadelphia. This card has on the one side printed the ten commandments and on the other side the Apostles' Creed. It is in the latter, respecting Jesus, that we read, he "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead." Beside the word "hell" there is an asterisk referring to a footnote, which is herewith given: "*i.e., continued in the state of the dead and under the power of death until the third day." This shows conclusively that the Presbyterian Board of ministers recognize the fact that Jesus was dead and not alive during the period of his entombment. He was in neither a hell of suffering nor a heaven of bliss. He was dead, as he himself declared in our text. His resurrection was his coming to life--and again we are told that he was raised from the dead by the Father's power.--*Acts 2:24,32.*

CEMETERIES--SLEEPING PLACES

Our common word cemetery signifies a sleeping place, and the thought thus conveyed is in full accord with the teachings of the Scriptures on the subject. They teach that the penalty of sin is death, and that death would have meant complete, absolute, perpetual destruction had it not been for God's mercy in providing for our redemption from that sentence and a resurrection from the dead through Jesus. And it is because of our faith in God's promise of a resurrection of the dead that we, in common with the Biblical writers, speak of death as a sleep. Thus, "Abraham slept with his fathers," all the prophets and kings "slept with their fathers," Stephen "fell on sleep" to await the awakening time in the resurrection morning, at the second coming of his Redeemer for the establishment of his Kingdom. Similarly the Apostle speaks of the dead in Christ being awakened in that glorious morning, and he even calls our attention to the fact that the whole world may be properly said to be "asleep in Jesus," because our Lord by his death redeemed the whole world of mankind and broke their death sentence and will in due time awaken them all in the resurrection morning. Hence the Apostle, in writing to the Church respecting their dead and dying friends,

both in and out of Christ, says, We sorrow not as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died [on behalf of original sin on the whole race] and rose again [to be the deliverer of the race from the bonds of sin and death] let us believe also [the logical consequence] that those who sleep in Jesus [whose death through his merit has been changed to a sleep] will God bring from the dead by him. (*I Thess. 4:13,14.*) This is in harmony with the Father's arrangement that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust, and that this work shall be accomplished by the Lord Jesus, his honored representative.

The word cemetery, therefore, rightly understood, the sleeping place of the dead, teaches a volume in itself to those who have the ears to hear. It is in full accord with the facts as we know them, and better still in full accord with the divine revelation that the "wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"--by a resurrection from the dead. (*Rom. 6:23.*) In this connection let us remember our Lord's words, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth," those who shall have passed their trial successfully unto life eternal, instantly perfected, while those who shall not have been approved will be brought forth that they may have the opportunity for rising up out of sin and death conditions by the judgments, chastenings and corrections of the Millennial Age. Our special attention for the moment is called to the word "graves" in this text. We have already seen that *sheol* in the Hebrew signifies the death state and that *hades* is its Greek equivalent, but the word here rendered "graves" is a different one, namely, *mnemeion*, which signifies "remembrance." The proper thought is that although our friends and neighbors of the world of mankind are passing to the tomb at the rate of 90,000 every day, nevertheless they are not blotted out of existence, but are still in divine "remembrance" and subjects of divine power and will eventually be released from the great prison-house of death by him who bought us all with his own precious blood.

RESURRECTION HOPES AND JOYS

It is in full accord with the Scriptural presentation that joy thrills our hearts as we come to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus and also as we think of the resurrection morning of the Millennial day and the promise that therein and thereby the Lord God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces, and there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away. But notwithstanding this natural, proper sentiment the resurrection does not hold its proper place in the minds of the majority of Christian people for the same reason

that the second coming of Christ has lost its proper relationship to their faith. The fault lies in the fact that unconsciously another hope than that of the Bible has been instilled, a hope that men do not die but pass immediately into glory or immediately into anguish eternal. To those who thus misread their Bibles the word resurrection can have but little real significance. To all such it is not only a needless and useless proposition but a very inconvenient one. They ask, "Why have a resurrection for those who have gone to heaven and who hope that its joys are eternal? Why have a resurrection for those who have passed into eternal torment? What is to be gained?" Very true, we answer! Under such conditions undoubtedly a resurrection would be of no value and would have no place, but those are not the conditions. The dead are dead; they have neither joy nor suffering while they sleep. They know nothing of the lapse of time; the awakening moment to each will be the next in consciousness to the one when they died. From this standpoint the resurrection is all important, without it there could be no future life or bliss. Hence the Apostle looked forward to the resurrection and pointed us forward to the same event for the culmination of our hopes--and our dear Redeemer indicated that the blessing of the world was dependent upon their hearing his voice and coming forth from the prison-house of death, the tomb, to hear the good tidings, to be judged or tested thereby as to their willingness to be obedient to their Creator. All who will obey the commands of the great King shall by his judgments then abroad in the earth be brought to perfection and life eternal, while those who will decline to be obedient at heart shall ultimately be destroyed in the Second Death.--*Acts 3:23.*

"BECOME THE FIRST-FRUITS"

The Apostle Paul found the spirit of the Greek philosophers intruding upon the teachings of the Gospel even in his day, so that in the Lord's providence it was proper for him to write a wonderful chapter (*I Cor. 15*) fully setting forth the doctrine of the resurrection and what would be our fate without the resurrection. He says, If there be no resurrection of the dead, our hope is vain, our preaching vain, we are yet in our sins; and those who have already died are perished, and our fate will be the same. If God has provided no resurrection for the dead then our future is hopeless and we might as well eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.--*Vs. 12-18.*

The Apostle was writing to those who believed in the resurrection of Jesus, but who disbelieved in the necessity for their own resurrection, and so he adds, If the dead rise not then Christ did not rise, and if Christ did not rise, the basis of all your hopes and faith drops out; and if Christ did rise from the dead you must

logically believe that the resurrection of his followers will be like his. Indeed, as the Apostle again says, the resurrection of the Church is spoken of as being Christ's resurrection, having a share in Christ's resurrection; because in coming forth the Church will share the same kind of resurrection as our Lord, be like him--put to death in the flesh they will be quickened in spirit, sown in corruption they will be raised in incorruption, sown in weakness they will be raised in power, sown animal bodies they will be raised spiritual bodies. All who now are transferred from Adam to Christ and accepted of God as members of the Body of Christ, members of the Bride of Christ, have his new nature, are begotten of the Spirit and will in the resurrection be spirit beings like their Lord and Head. The remainder of mankind in the resurrection will be like their head, Adam. As is the heavenly one, such will they be who attain to his nature; as was the earthly one, such will they be who in this Gospel Age do not experience the begetting of the holy Spirit. As to the remainder of the natural seed, their resurrection will be to earthly conditions, a gradual uplifting to the full perfection of human nature, all that Adam had originally, plus experience.

If our Lord became the first-fruits of them that slept, did he not sleep? And do not the others sleep? And if he was awakened, raised from the dead by the Father's power, must not all be awakened and lifted up? A first-fruits implies after-fruits. The Scriptures point out that the Church is included with the Lord as a part of the first-fruits, "a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures." (*Jas. 1:18*.) Thus the resurrection of the Christ began with the resurrection of our Lord and will be consummated with the change of the last member of the Church, which is his Body. "Christ, the firstfruits," will then be complete. But this will not consummate the divine plan, for it is God's intention to have the after-fruits, a great harvest, which will be gathered during the Millennial Age. To this the Apostle refers, saying, Afterwards they that are Christ's during his *parousia*. Our Lord's *parousia* will continue for a thousand years; he will be present in the world, present for the very purpose of ascertaining how many of the world, under favorable conditions of knowledge and opportunity and assistance, will be glad to go up on the highway of holiness to perfection, to full recovery out of sin and death. That noble company will be the after-fruits of the divine plan. Earth as well as heaven will be filled with the glory of God when all evil doers shall have been cut off; and then every voice in heaven and earth shall be heard praising him that sitteth upon the throne and the Lamb for the grand consummation of the divine plan!

THE NARRATIVE OF OUR LESSON

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. (*I 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.

"PUT TO DEATH IN THE FLESH-- QUICKENED IN SPIRIT"

Our Lord took our nature not with a view to keeping it to all eternity, but merely that he might be able to present the ransom-sacrifice on our behalf; that he might die as the man Christ Jesus for the man Adam and his posterity involved with him in his sin. The death of Jesus finished the work which he came to do, as his dying words show--"It is finished." There was no reason why he should be raised a human being, but every reason to the contrary. As a human being he would have been circumscribed in his power, talents, dignities, honors and thus have been forever humiliated as the result of the great work which he accomplished in obedience to the Father's program. This would be quite the contrary of what the Apostle points out when he declares that God raised Jesus from the dead and highly exalted him far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. (*Phil. 2:9; Eph. 2:21*.) Most evidently, then, he does not now have a human nature, but, as the Scriptures declare, a divine nature, for the human nature, instead of being far above that of angels, is a "little lower than the angels."--*Psa. 8:5*.

So, then, our Lord was put to death in the flesh-- not quickened or made alive or resurrected in the flesh -- but as the Apostle declared, he was quickened, raised in spirit, a spirit being of the highest order, "changed" from mortal to immortal, because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."

TWO LESSONS WERE TAUGHT

We see, then, 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**.

How could these two great and important lessons be taught to the disciples then and since, seeing, as our Lord says, that they were slow of hearing because they were natural men with natural minds, naturally disposed to think of things only upon the earthly, fleshly plane? The method adopted by our Lord was, first, to make very distinct to their natural sense the fact of his resurrection by the removal of his body from the tomb, by the vision of angels speaking of our Lord as risen, by the clothes and napkins lying in their places as though they had been laid aside by one awaking from sleep. To emphasize this lesson our Lord, although a spirit being, appeared to the disciples in bodies of flesh which on one or two occasions he permitted to be touched. But lest they should get the idea that he was still man, lest they should lose sight of the fact that he was a spirit being appearing as a man, as the angels had frequently done in the past, our Lord appeared in various forms, once as a gardener, once as a stranger traveling to Emmaus, once as a stranger on the shore of Galilee calling to the fishermen and directing them where to cast their nets, twice in the upper room, where he demonstrated that he was not a man by coming into their midst while the doors were shut and, after a brief conversation, vanishing out of their sight while the door was still shut. In these various ways the Lord demonstrated the double lesson, and remained with his disciples forty days that these lessons might be well learned--first, that he was risen; secondly, that he was changed and was no longer the man Christ Jesus.

No wonder that the early Church, appreciating the value of our Lord's resurrection and the fact that they were no longer Jews under the Jewish Law, gradually changed the day specially set apart for divine worship from the seventh day to the first day of the week--but not with any law or command, simply of good will and of choice, since to the Christian every day is a Sabbath, a holy day in which he is not to do anything which would be wrong or displeasing to the Lord. The custom is a beautiful one and all who love the Lord and appreciate the value of his resurrection must esteem the first day of the week on that account. It was made sacred by our Lord's resurrection; it became, therefore, to his followers the day of hope.

Joining the various accounts of the resurrection morning we find (**Mark 16:1**) that Mary Magdalene, mentioned in our lesson, was one of the first at the sepulchre while it was yet dark; that with her were

Mary, the mother of James and Salome, and (**Luke 24:10**) Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. On their way they had been wondering who would roll away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre that they might enter with their spices to complete the embalming work which was discontinued two evenings before because of the Jewish Sabbath then beginning. To their surprise the stone was already rolled away. They tarried awhile wondering, and then in the dim light they perceived that the Lord's body was not there. Perplexed by their further loss Mary hastened to the home of John, with whom Peter was lodging, and related these facts. The two apostles ran to the sepulchre. John, the younger, outrunning Peter, arrived there first. But by this time the other women had departed to communicate the news to the other disciples. Awestricken, John had stooped down and looked in, but Peter, on arrival, still more courageous, went in followed by John. They found things as Mary had described them, the body gone, the linen cloths there. Troubled and perplexed they went their way. Although the indication is that they both believed, their belief was not that the Lord had risen, but that Mary's story was true, that his body had been removed, "for as yet they knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead."--*V. 9*.

Mary returned to the tomb filled with sorrow; she was weeping and saying in her heart, They might at least have left us the body of our Lord. She looked again into the sepulchre. Ah, now she saw something different. Two angels were present, who said, "Why weepest thou?" intimating that there was no cause for weeping and thus no doubt helping to prepare Mary for the next step of our Lord's revelation. A noise or perhaps a shadow called her attention backward and she saw a man who she supposed was the gardener and she appealed to him, Sir, if you have borne him hence tell me where you have laid him and I will see that you are not further troubled in the matter, for myself and his other friends will care for his remains. Then Jesus, who had hidden his identity by appearing in "another form," like a gardener, in different clothing from that which was parted amongst the soldiers, and different also from that in which he had been shrouded, revealed himself through the tone of his voice which she so well knew, uttering her name only. In a moment the truth flashed upon her mind and she cried, Rabboni, my Master, my Lord!

With us as with Mary sorrow sometimes fills our hearts and we see not the streams of joy and everlasting blessing which the Lord has for us; not until we hear his voice, his word, do we appreciate the truth. But all who know the Master truly know his voice, know his message, know his spirit, his disposition; as he himself expressed it, My sheep hear

my voice and they follow me, they recognize not the voice of strangers.--*John 3:5*.

"I AM NOT YET ASCENDED"

In her ecstasy Mary was apparently about to grasp the Lord by the feet. Her thought evidently was, This is a vision, which will pass away and I will see my Lord no more; I will hold him tightly; where he is I must be. But Jesus taught her otherwise, and the lesson is a good one for us also. He would have her remember that he had already said, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Why, then, should she detain him? Besides, she was not ready to go with him, she had lessons to learn, experiences were to still further develop her character, to fit and prepare her for the Kingdom blessings. He must go, she must stay. She must learn submission, confidence in him and have a realization that he is able to make all things work together for good to those who trust him. Our Lord gave Mary a message for the apostles, a service she could render him and them--and the intimation is that she should rather have been thinking of such a service instead of holding him by the feet; she should be exercising faith and accepting divine providence and hastening to spread the good tidings of his resurrection to others. The lesson for us is obvious. We, too, have heard of the death and resurrection of Jesus and additionally have learned of God's grace through him, and it is our privilege to carry the message to all of the brethren wherever they may be, to all who have the hearing ear.

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.

"PREACHED TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON"

We refer to these words of the Apostle Peter because they are so generally misunderstood. Some suppose that our Lord went to Purgatory or to some other place of torment and delivered some discourses during the period of his death. Here we find the error respecting the meaning of life and death still further confusing; we ought to understand that when our Lord was dead he could not preach and that the dead of mankind could not hear; as the Scriptures declare, "In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave [*sheol*] who shall give thee thanks?" (*Psa. 6:5*.) "There is no work nor device nor knowledge in the grave [*sheol*] whither thou goest," whither all mankind go. (*Eccl.*

9:10.) What, then, is the signification of the words of St. Peter quoted above? We reply that he is referring to those angels who sinned in the days of Noah--the fallen angels. They are the spirits in prison, under restraints, "chains of darkness," until the judgment of the great day. True, mankind in general are said to be in prison also; the tomb is the great prison-house to which our Lord referred, quoting Isaiah's prophecy and assuring us that ultimately he will open the prison-doors and bring forth the prisoners. Again he assures us that he has the key to this prison, the "key of death and of *hades*"--the tomb. But men are never referred to as spirits; angels are so referred to; they are spirit beings; man is not, he is a human or earthly being. True, we sometimes speak of the spirit of life, the power of life in man, but we do not speak of it as a thing that could be preached to; it merely refers to his vitality. Every spirit that can be preached to must be a spirit being and must be alive and not dead, in order to be able to receive the preaching.

With these points in mind it is very easy to see that the Apostle was referring to our Lord's preaching in a figurative sense in much the same way that we are in the habit of saying, "Actions speak louder than words." Our Lord's sermons to the fallen angels, the spirits in prison, restrained from liberty in the days of Noah, were along this line of action, not of words. When cast out by our Lord, some of these spirits who had obsessed humanity cried out, "We know thee who thou art!" They knew Jesus was the Logos, the Father's representative who had created them; they knew that he had left the glory of the Father and humbled himself to take the earthly nature instead; they knew that he had consecrated his human life to death as a sin-offering for mankind. In all this they beheld a wonderful lesson, yet we cannot suppose that they any more than the apostles understood that our Lord would be raised from the dead. When, however, he was raised up by the Father's power on the third day and they beheld him again a spirit being of the highest order, it must have been a matter of astonishment and wonderment to them. It preached a lesson, namely, that obedience to God is profitable. It must have preached another lesson also, that God who punishes evil doers is sure to bless and reward all those who seek to do his will.

It was a sermon along still another line, namely: it taught the love of God, his compassion toward sinners, and it gave the fallen angels room to reflect that if God had such compassion upon the poor, fallen human race, he might ultimately have as much compassion upon them and grant them some opportunity for escaping from the punishment which had come upon them for their sins. Theirs, indeed, was a different penalty from that upon man, but why might they not hope that the same God who was rich in mercy upon

Adam and his race would have compassion also upon any of those who would have the heart desire to come back into harmony with him. It is our thought that this was a powerful sermon, and we shall not be surprised to find by and by that as a result of this sermon some of those fallen angels repented and did thereafter strive to live in harmony with the Father, hoping that some time divine mercy might be extended to them for their release and their restoration to fellowship with the holy angels. And this very hope is held out by the Apostle when he tells us that the Church shall judge not only the world of mankind but shall also judge angels. This means a judgment or trial time for the fallen angels, the holy angels needing no judging or trial.

IT IS SOWN--IT IS RAISED

Before leaving this subject we call attention to the words of the Apostle descriptive of the resurrection change of the Church. (*I Cor. 15:42,43.*) He says, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body." And since the Church's resurrection is really a share or part of Christ's resurrection, the First Resurrection, these words must also describe our Lord's resurrection. The question we raise is, What is it that was sown and that was raised? We answer that it was our Lord's soul or being. When he was thirty years of age he was simply

the perfect one, a man separate from sinners. But when he consecrated himself at baptism and was begotten of the holy Spirit he was then a New Creature in embryo. It was our Lord the New Creature who was the heir of all things, the High Priest whose privilege it was to sacrifice. He sacrificed his flesh, his earthly nature, which he covenanted to the Lord at his baptism. He finished the work of sacrificing at Calvary; for parts of three days he was dead, but when the resurrection moment came and the Father raised him up by his own power, he raised up not the sacrificed flesh but the New Creature, the "it" to which the Apostle refers, the "it" which was sown, buried in the flesh, in dishonor, with the wicked and the rich. It was raised the third day to glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. In other words the New Creature was perfected by being given a new body. Thus seen all of the Lord's people, as was their Lord, are dual beings. They as New Creatures have a reckoned existence while their mortal bodies are reckoned dead. By and by when the mortal flesh is actually dead the New Creature will be perfected by being granted a new body, a resurrection body. Let us remember the Apostle's words and apply them to ourselves, I do count all things but loss and dross that I may win Christ...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection [sharing it], being made conformable to his death.--*Phil. 3:8-10.*

