

# The Signs of the Times.

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

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### HAVE HOPE.

THE shadow of the mountain falls athwart the lowly plain,  
And the shadow of the cloudlet hangs above the mountain's head—  
And the highest hearts and lowest wear the shadow of some pain,  
And the smile is scarcely flitted ere the anguished tear is shed.

For no eyes have there ever been without a weary tear,  
And those lips cannot be human which never heaved a sigh;  
For without the dreary winter there has never been a year,  
And the tempests hide their terrors in the calmest summer sky.

So, this dreary life is passing—and we move amid its maze,  
And we grope along together, half in darkness, half in light;  
And our hearts are often hardened by the mysteries of our ways,  
Which are never all in shadow and never wholly bright.

And our dim eyes ask a beacon, and our weary feet a guide,  
And our hearts of all life's mysteries seek the meaning and the key;  
And a cross gleams o'er our pathway, on it hangs the Crucified,  
And he answers all our yearnings by the whisper, "Follow me."

—Rev. F. Ryan.

### THE GREAT CONTROVERSY,

BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS ANGELS AND SATAN AND HIS ANGELS.

#### CHAPTER SIXTEEN—CONTINUED.

##### Joseph in Egypt.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE drouth still continued in the land of Canaan; and, as time passed on, the grain that had been brought from Egypt was consumed. The sons of Jacob well knew how useless and even dangerous it would be to present themselves, without Benjamin, before the prime minister of Egypt; they knew, too, how desperate must be any effort to change their father's resolution, and they awaited the issue in silence. The aged man saw the faces of all in the encampment grow pale and thin with hunger; he heard the cries of the children for bread; and at last he said, "Go again, buy us a little food."

Judah answered, "The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us we will go down and buy thee food; but if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down; for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face except your brother be with you." Seeing that the resolution of his father was giving way, he added, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones; and he offered to be surety for his brother, and to take upon himself the father's blame forever if he did not restore Benjamin to him.

Jacob could no longer withhold his consent, and he bade his sons prepare for the journey. They were to take to the ruler a present of such things as the destitute country afforded, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, myrrh, nuts and almonds, also "double money" in their sacks,—that formerly returned, and some for the present purchase. "Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man."

As his sons were about to start on their doubtful journey, the aged father arose, and, standing

in their midst, raised his hands to Heaven and pronounced on them a gracious benediction: "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

So they went down again into Egypt, and presented themselves before Joseph. As his eye fell upon Benjamin, from whom he had been so long separated, he was deeply moved. He gave no token of recognition, however, but ordered the ruler of his house to take them to his princely residence, and there prepare for an entertainment. They were greatly alarmed at this, fearing that it was for the purpose of calling them to account for the money found in their sacks. They thought that it might have been intentionally placed there, to furnish occasion to make them slaves, and that they were brought into the governor's palace better to accomplish this object. They sought the steward of the house, and related to him the circumstances, and in proof of their innocence informed him that they had brought back the money found in their sacks, also other money to buy food; and they added, "We cannot tell who put the money in our sacks."

The man replied, "Peace be to you; fear not; your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks. I had your money." These words relieved their anxiety, and when Simeon, who had been released from prison, joined them, they felt that God was indeed gracious unto them, as their father had entreated that he would be.

When the governor came home, they offered him their presents, making before him the customary obeisance. Again his dreams came into his mind. There had been one including his father; and now, after the usual salutations to his guests, he hastened to ask, "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?" "Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive," was the answer with another obeisance. Then his eye rested upon Benjamin, his own mother's son, and as if to make the matter sure he asked, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? God be gracious unto thee, my son;"—but, overpowered by feelings of tenderness, he could say no more without betraying his emotion. He hastened to his own private chamber, and there found relief in tears.

Having recovered his self-possession and removed all traces of tears, he returned, and ordered the feast to be prepared. Among the Egyptians, caste was very strict, and they never ate with the people of another nation. Separate tables were therefore set for them, another for Joseph's brethren and still another for the governor of the kingdom. When seated at the table his brethren were surprised to see that they were arranged in exact order, the eldest being placed first, and the youngest last, as was customary when their ages were known. Joseph sent a portion of food to each, Benjamin's five times as large as any of the others. He did this, not only to show his particular regard for Benjamin, but to prove his brethren, to see if they regarded their youngest brother with the same feelings of envy and hatred which they had manifested toward himself. Still supposing that Joseph did not understand their language, they freely conversed with one another in his presence, therefore he had a good opportunity to learn the true state of their feelings.

Still he desired further proof. There could be no excuse for detaining them longer; and, after directing his steward to conceal his drinking-cup of silver in the sack of the youngest, he let them go.

Joyfully they set out on the homeward journey. Simeon was with them, their sacks were filled with grain, and they felt that they had escaped safely from the perils that had seemed to surround them. But they had only reached the outskirts of the city when they were overtaken by the governor's steward, who uttered the scathing inquiry, "Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is

not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby, indeed, he divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing." Kings and rulers had a cup from which they drank, which was considered a sure detective if any poisonous substance was placed in their drink. To the accusation of the steward the travelers answered, "Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing. Behold, the money which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan; how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen."

The steward said, "Now also will it be according unto your words; he with whom it is found shall be my servant and ye shall be blameless."

The search began immediately. The sacks were placed on the ground, and the steward examined them all, beginning with Reuben's and going down to the sack of the youngest. The cup was found in Benjamin's sack!

At this discovery all were speechless. To express their utter wretchedness they rent their garments, as was the custom when in deep affliction. As they sadly returned to the city they felt that the hand of God was against them for their past wickedness. The fears of their father, they thought, would now be fully realized. By their own promise, Benjamin was doomed to a life of slavery.

They followed the steward to the palace, and, finding the prime minister still there, they fell before him on the ground. "What deed is this that ye have done?" he said. "Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? Joseph asked this question to draw forth from his brethren an acknowledgment of their past wrong course, that their true feelings might be more fully revealed. He did not claim any power of divination, but was willing his brethren should believe that he could read the secret acts of their lives. Judah answered, "What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants. Behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found." The reply was, God forbid that I should do so; but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

In his intense distress, Judah now drew near to the ruler, and exclaimed, "O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my Lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh," and he related to him the reluctance of his father to let Benjamin come with them to Egypt, the father's deep grief at the loss of Joseph, and that Benjamin was all that was left of the mother whom Jacob loved. "Now therefore, when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us (seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life), it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die; and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father forever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that come on my father."

Joseph was satisfied. He had proved his brethren and had seen in them the fruits of true repentance for their sins. He was so deeply affected that he could no longer conceal his feelings, and he gave orders that all but these men should leave the hall; then he wept aloud, and cried out, "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?" His brethren could not answer him, for surprise and terror. They could not realize that the ruler of Egypt was their brother Joseph, whom they had envied



and would have murdered, but were finally content to sell as a slave. All their ill-treatment of him passed before them. They remembered how they had despised his dreams; and had labored to prevent their fulfillment. Yet they had acted their part in fulfilling these dreams; and now they stood before him condemned and amazed. As Joseph saw the confusion he said to them, "Come near to me, I pray you," they came near. And he said, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." He nobly sought to make this occasion as easy for his brethren as possible. He had no desire to increase their embarrassment by censuring them. He felt that they had suffered enough for their cruelty to him, and he endeavored to comfort them. He went on, "For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years in the which there shall be neither earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God; and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt. Come down unto me, tarry not. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast. And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. And behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them, and after that his brethren talked with him."

They humbly confessed the wrongs which they had committed against Joseph, and entreated his forgiveness. They were greatly rejoiced to find that he was alive; for they had suffered the keenest anxiety and remorse since their cruelty toward him. Joseph gladly forgave his brethren, and sent them away abundantly supplied with provisions, and carriages, and everything necessary for the removal of all their families and attendants to Egypt. On Benjamin he bestowed more valuable presents than upon his other brethren. Then, fearing that disputes and divisions would rise among them on the homeward journey, he gave them, as they were about leaving him, the significant charge, "See that ye fall not out by the way."

#### MINISTERIAL POPULARITY.

AMONG the cursed blessings that are conferred on preachers, is that popularity which makes them for the time the center of attraction and the topic of general conversation. Out of a thousand or ten thousand ministers not more than two or three at any time are likely to be famous, and it will be a mercy if those do not speedily come to be infamous.

Most famous men are over-estimated, and their popularity causes unpleasant comparisons, breeds envy and distrust, leads to criticism, slander and fault-finding; causes every error to be magnified, and every fault to be proclaimed; and if in some unexpected hour the praised and flattered pet of society shows himself to be a man of like passions, infirmities and sins, with others, how soon every foul bird of prey will peck at his gay plumage, and turn his glory into shame.

Young man, do not fret because your kite does not fly quite so high as your neighbor's. Hold on to the string, and you may keep it out of the ditch. It may be very pleasant to see your name in print, but that depends largely upon what is printed under it.

Before honor is humility. If you can serve your generation in this life, and get quietly into your grave without bringing reproach upon yourself, your friends and your Lord, you will have a fine opportunity for fame and appreciation in the day when the righteous shall "shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Wait and see if it is not so.—*The Christian*.

#### THE MILLENNIUM.

BY ELDER JAMES WHITE.

TEXT: And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. Rev. 20:4, 5.

The terms employed in the text must be so understood as to harmonize with all parts of the text, and with the Holy Scriptures generally.

1. *Thrones.* These are thrones of judgment. This is evident from the fact that it is said of those who sat upon them that judgment was given unto them. Compare Matt. 19:28. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

2. *Souls.* The persons of the righteous when they shall be raised to immortal life. It is said of them that they lived. As man, formed of the dust, after receiving the principle of natural life from his Creator, was a living soul, Gen. 2:7, or a living person, so the worthy characters named in the text, after receiving the principle of immortal life from the Redeemer, and being seated with him on thrones of judgment, may be designated as the souls, or persons, of those who had lived righteously, had died, and been raised from the dead. Eight souls, meaning eight persons, were saved in Noah's ark from the waters of the flood. 1 Pet. 3:20.

3. *Lived,* simply means that they will be raised to a condition of life, from a state of death. This appears evident from what is said of those who do not live at that time: "But the rest of the dead lived not again (were not raised from death) until the thousand years were finished."

The word millennium signifies a thousand years. The millennium of Rev. 20 is to open with the revelation of the Son of God from Heaven, the destruction of the living wicked, the resurrection of the just, and the change of the living righteous to immortal life. It is a period in which Christ will reign with the just of all ages who have suffered with him. This period is bounded at each end with a resurrection. Christ declares that "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29. And Paul testifies "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24:15. But it is left to the Revelator to place these two resurrections one thousand years apart, one at each end of the millennium.

The popular view of this subject is that the gospel of Jesus Christ will so far control the minds and hearts of men that the whole world will finally be converted; and become holy by its influence, and that this happy state will continue one thousand years; and that during this time Christ will reign with his people spiritually. And while some hold that he will come at the close of the millennium, when the judgment will take place, others reject this doctrine plainly stated by our Lord and his apostles, that he will appear the second time to raise the righteous dead. These accepting, as divine truth, the sentiment found in orthodox creeds, that the souls of the just go to God at death, where in his presence there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand pleasure for evermore, see no reason why our Lord should return to this world to raise the body once polluted with sin, now returned to dust, and as the result of such teachings, thousands in all the popular churches are giving up the scriptural doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

From the very nature of the case, the conversion of the world is an impossibility. God is the same during all time. He deals with men and nations impartially. Satan is the same, excepting that the experience of six thousand years has made him more artful in seducing men and women into sin. The fallen race is the same, only that each succeeding generation degenerates physically, mentally, and morally; hence sinners are more easily held by him in their rebellion against God, and in their sins. This state of things will increase till the world becomes fully ripe for her final doom. This is seen in the metallic image of the second chapter of Daniel. Here five universal kingdoms are the subject of prophecy. Four of

these pertain to the mortal state, one to the immortal. The four earthly monarchies, Babylon, Persia, Grecia, and Rome, are severally represented by gold, silver, brass, and iron. We not only see in the symbol the depreciation of value from gold to silver, to brass, and to iron, but we also see the last divided condition of earthly governments, just before the opening glories of the immortal kingdom, represented by iron mixed with miry clay. A careful examination will fully convince the intelligent Bible student that the Sacred Scriptures do not teach that at any period of time all men will be converted to God. There were but few righteous men from Adam to Moses. And the numbers of the just in the Jewish age, compared with the multitudes of the unbelieving, were very small. Neither does God's plan in the Christian age embrace the conversion of all men. The gospel is preached to all nations, and thus God visits "the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." Acts 15:14. Among the finally saved will not be found all of any one generation, or all of any one nation; but some of every age and every tongue will join in the song of the lamb: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. 5:9.

The dealings of the great God of love, mercy, and justice with his people of all ages are equal. The charge of rebellious Israel that his ways were not equal, and the Lord's interrogative defense in these words: "Saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?" Ezek. 18:29. God tests all his created intelligences impartially. He has no favorite men, no favorite nation, and no favorite age. Adam had a wise and prudent test, both in Eden, before the fall, and out of Eden, after the fall. Had he lost moral power by the fall, and had his posterity become the lawful prey of Satan? He had the experience of the temptation, fall and his expulsion from Eden as a lamp to guide his feet in the path of obedience and faith. And has the race gradually sunken in physical, mental, and moral power all along the way of the ages? In like ratio has the light and power of the gospel of God's dear Son increased from the fall in the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian ages.

But the doctrine of the temporal millennium that gives to the church of Jesus Christ a sinless period of one thousand years, in which Satan will be bound, virtually charges God with inequality in his dealings with the children of men. Of the cloud of witnesses, the worthy Patriarchs and Prophets, Paul says:—

"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:36-40. In the name of reason and revelation we inquire why should God in his providence allow these to "wade through bloody seas," and millions of the holy martyrs of Jesus to suffer tortures and death by all the cruel means that wicked men and devils could invent, and then chain up Satan and pour a flood of light and glory upon the world that will pass unborn millions up to heaven "on flowery beds of ease?"

God's plan to convert sinners, and to save all who would obey him and believe in Jesus, has been in operation about six thousand years. A crucified and risen Saviour has been preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven for more than eighteen centuries; yet the world has not been converted. And the prospects of its conversion to Bible holiness never looked darker than at the present time. In the forcible words of another, we would inquire:—

"And what are the present prospects of a church that has set out in all confidence to convert the world? How may those now putting on the harness boast of greater expected success than is warranted by the experience of those who have put it off after having fought the good fight? The prophets could not convert the world; are we mightier than they? The apostles could not convert the world; are we stronger than they? The martyrs could not convert the world; can we do



more than they? The church for eighteen hundred years could not convert the world; can we do it? They have preached the gospel of Christ; they have gone to earth's remotest bounds; so can we. They have saved 'some,' so can we.

"They have wept as so few believed their report; so can we. They have finished their course with joy, and the ministry they have received to testify of the gospel of the grace of God; we can do the same. Can we reasonably hope to do more? 'It would take to all eternity to bring the millennium at the rate that modern revivals progress,' said the venerable Dr. Lyman Beecher, before a ministerial convention, held close by old Plymouth rock. And what hope is there that they will progress more rapidly? Is it in the word of God? Glad would we be to find it there. Sadly we read that 'evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.'

"Has God a mightier Saviour—a more powerful Spirit? Has he another gospel which will save the world? Where is it? Is there any way to the kingdom other than that which leads through much tribulation? Is there another way to the crown besides the way of crosses? Can we reign with Him unless we first suffer in his cause?

"No doubt the world might be converted if they desired to know the Lord. And so, had all who heard received with gladness the word of God, the world might have been converted within twenty years of the day of Pentecost. If each Christian had brought one single soul to God with each successive year, the calm splendors of the millennial era might have shone upon the declining years of the apostles of Jesus Christ. But instead of this, ages of darkness came on. The world did not repent, but the church apostatized. If the gospel were to convert the world, we should have seen tokens of it ere this. But where are such omens to be found? Shall we look at Judson, who labored ten years before one sinner yielded to the claims of the gospel? Shall we look to the dense darkness of the heathen world? Shall we look at the formalism of the professed church? Shall we look at the wide extension of infidelity? Shall we look at the abounding of iniquity and the waxing cold of love? Shall we look at a world where eighteen hundred years of toil and tears have not brought one-twentieth part of mankind even to a profession of true Christianity; and where not more than one-fifth claim for themselves the dubious title of Christian nations? Shall we look over a world in which we cannot find one nation of Christians, nor one tribe of Christians, nor one city of Christians, nor one town of Christians, nor one village of Christians, nor one hamlet of Christians, save here and there where a questionable faith has led a few, with hypocrites even in their midst, to withdraw themselves from the world, and cherish the untried virtues of secluded life? Surely, after eighteen hundred years of experiment with that system which was to convert the world, men might point to some country, to some province, to some nation, and say, Behold the commencement of a converted world.

"But will not the gospel then prove a failure? That depends upon what is to be expected of it. If the gospel was to effect the eternal salvation of all mankind, then failing to accomplish that work is a failure of the gospel. If the gospel was to convert the world, then, if it is not done, it will prove a failure. But if the gospel was preached 'to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name,' then it is not a failure. If it was given that God might in infinite mercy and love 'save some,' then it is not a failure. If it was given that every repentant sinner might have eternal life, and that every good soldier might receive a crown of glory, then it is not a failure. If it was given that an innumerable company might be redeemed out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue under heaven, then it is not a failure. If it was given that the vales and hills of Paradise restored might teem with a holy throng who shall be 'equal to the angels, and be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection,' then it is not a failure. If it was given that the elect might be brought into one great family of holy ones, then it is not a failure. And was not this its object, rather than the exaltation of a worldly church to the splendours of earthly prosperity, while beneath the theatre of their easy triumph there slumber the ashes of prophets and the dust of the apostles? Are they to hold jubilee a thousand years, while the martyrs' unceasing cry, 'How long! O Lord,' goes up to God? Are they to have their songs of triumph, while the whole creation groaneth for

deliverance, and while that longed-for day of the redemption of our body is postponed? Nay, verily, the hope of the one body is one hope. The hope of the church stops not at death, it sweeps beyond earth's scenes of tempest and of storm, and reposes in the calm beamings of that Sun of Righteousness which shall glow above the bosom of Paradise regained."

The doctrine of the world's conversion and a temporal millennium being based upon false interpretations and incorrect quotations of certain portions of the Sacred Scriptures, it is proper that we should here notice those texts usually quoted to prove this doctrine, and show that they do not mean what they are said to prove:—

1. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. 2: 8. To the casual reader this passage may appear to prove that the heathen will be given to Christ by conversion. But the next verse shows their destruction instead of their conversion. The Psalmist continues: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

2. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll until it becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth. All that our temporal millennium friends accomplish with this passage, they do by quoting it incorrectly. We will here give the text as it reads: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2: 34, 35.

If these words of the prophet do not impress the mind of the reader with the idea of utter destruction, then language fails to express the thought. In this remarkable passage the following points are worthy of notice:

1. The stone smote the image upon his feet, and brake the iron, clay, brass, silver, and gold, to pieces together. Here is destruction, not conversion.

2. They became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them. Here is illustrated the final removal of all earthly governments.

3. Then the stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. In this prophecy, the stone has nothing in common with the image. The image, a symbol of earthly governments and all wicked men, is first removed, and then the stone fills the whole earth. But if it be urged that the dashing of the heathen (Ps. 2: 9) and the breaking of the image (Dan. 2: 34) mean the conversion of the world, then Paul's words, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," prove the conversion of Satan.

4. A nation shall be born in a day. Here is another incorrect quotation. Isa. 66: 8, reads: "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." This text has no allusion to the conversion of sinners; but evidently refers to the resurrection of the just, when the nation of the saved shall be born, or brought from their graves, in a day, or at once, at the sounding of the last trumpet.

5. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." Then let it be borne in mind that this prophetic declaration is to be fulfilled in connection with other events in the period covered by the woe, when it is also said, "And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11: 15, 18.

Here, again, destruction, and not conversion and preservation, is the burden of the word of the Lord by the prophet. Astonishing, that grave divines should find a converted world under the last woe of the Almighty, in connection with manifestation of his wrath in the destruction of sinners.

6. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be

preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14. That those who teach the world's conversion would have the gospel preached to all nations, every individual hear it, believe it, obey it, and all become holy by it. What then? The end? No, not until the world has enjoyed a sinless period of one thousand years. But the text does not say that every individual will even hear this gospel of the kingdom. It does not state that any one will be converted and made holy by it. And we find it far from intimating that the world will be converted, and remain sinless a thousand years.

7. "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Micah 4: 3. See also Isa. 2: 4. The reader will please notice that Micah 4: 1, speaks of the exalted state of the professed church of Christ in the last days. Mountains mean earthly government. The church, here represented by "the mountain of the house of the Lord," was to be exalted above the hills. It was to be established in the tops of the mountains.

In verses 2-5 is a statement, not of what the Lord declares would take place in the last days, but what the multitudes of popular professors, who are looking for the conversion of the world, would say. The statement commences thus: "And many nations shall come, and say." Verse 2. But the Lord speaks in verses 6 and 7, as follows: "In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted." "In that day," when many nations are prophesying peace and safety, the Lord's remnant people are driven out and afflicted.

But we have more and very decisive testimony in regard to the state of the nations in the last days. The Lord speaks by his prophet thus: Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near. Let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears." Joel 3: 9, 10. Instead of peace among the nations, or that they will not lift up the sword against each other in the last days, "evil shall go forth from nation to nation," and "the sword of the Lord shall devour from the one end of the land even to the other end of the land: no flesh shall have peace." Jer. 12: 12; 25: 32.

This subject may appear still more clear and forcible by arranging what many nations say, and what the Lord says, side by side as follows:—

## MANY NATIONS SAY.

And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and reprove strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Micah 4: 2, 3.

## THE LORD SAYS.

Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near. Let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and reprove strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Jer. 3: 9-12.

To this agree the words of Paul: "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thess. 5: 2, 3. How strikingly is this saying of peace and safety fulfilled in the preaching of the temporal millennium, the conversion of the world, and the prophecy of peace among the nations; while Scripture and facts combine to show that the world is sinking still lower and lower, the wicked are waxing worse and worse, and the nations are making far greater preparations for war than at any former period.

8. "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." Jer. 31: 34. These words from the Lord by the mouth of his prophet are in the promise of the new covenant, and relate, first, to the condition of each individual with whom the new covenant is made; and, secondly, to the fullness of the blessings of the gospel, when all are brought into harmony with God in the everlasting state. Both ideas are embraced in the promise. But that every individual will be converted, or that all of any generation this side of the immortal state will be brought into covenant relation with God, the Scriptures do not teach.

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## THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

JAMES WHITE,  
J. N. ANDREWS,  
URIAN SMITH,

EDITORS.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, JANUARY 29, 1880.

## ORIGIN OF THE FIRST SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH IN AMERICA.

(Concluded.)

THE next meeting Bro. Debill was called to give the reason of his not sitting down at the table of the Lord; to which he answered, "that he could not sit down with them who keep the seventh day, fearing they have left Christ."

Upon which Mr. Tory said (by laying it some to the consciences of those persons), "How sad a thing is it, that you should be the cause to turn a brother out of his way and to stumble."

To which Mr. H. answered, "It is a sad thing that an old disciple of Christ should be offended at his brethren for their keeping God's commandments, and it is a sad thing, and offensive to good men in other colonies, to hear that the elders of this church should deny the ten words to be a rule in gospel times; it is a stink in their nostrils."

With too much commotion of spirit, Mr. Luker said, "If there be any stink, you it is that have made it."

"No," said Mr. Hiscox, "'tis you, the leaders of the congregation being yea and nay in this matter, that is of so bad a savor."

At the meeting, after it was broken up, there was much discourse, and sometimes too hot words on both sides; Mr. H. discoursing with Mr. Wilds (one of them that laid down the observation of the seventh day), about his denying of the law; to whom he replied, "Who denies it?" Upon which Mr. Tory said, "I do." To which Mr. Wild said, "What! deny them?" And he answered, "Yes, and that with open face, and I do affirm that the ten words were never written in any Gentile's heart." Then Mr. Hiscox said, "Seeing you are not agreed in it, I shall leave you to debate the matter among yourselves."

The next meeting was spent in endeavoring to remove Mr. Hiscox's grounds, and there was much reasoning concerning the elders denying the ten words to be any rule to the Gentiles; they then endeavoring to show that they were never commanded to keep any part of the law; to which those who were in the observation of the seventh day replied, "that under the former dispensation there was a church and a world as there is now; and as it is the duty of the world now to repent and believe in the gospel, so it was the duty of the world to be proselyted and joined to the then church of God." This was by most of the elders denied, by affirming that God made not the covenant with the Gentiles; and therefore no sin in them, though they walked contrary to it. And others of the church said, "they did not think the Gentiles would ever be blamed for the breach of the ten words." Upon which they said, and endeavored to produce Scriptures to prove, "all under sin, and all to have gone out of the way, and that whatsoever the law saith it saith to them that are under the law, that all the world might become guilty before God; and that they owned that by the deeds of the law none should be justified, yet by the law is the knowledge of sin, both to Jews and Gentiles."

Then Mr. Tory replied, "It is a sad thing that we should thus abuse the Scriptures."

To which Mr. Hiscox said, "I never met with any that did understand them otherwise, but yourselves."

So by this time there was too much heat of spirit.

Hereupon, Mr. Holmes told the brethren, that "he judged they were beside the work," saying, "he thought they should put Bro. Hiscox on it to prove his seventh day practice, or else to fall under."

Upon which Mr. Hiscox said, "Bro. Holmes, you are not right there; you shan't slip your neck out of the collar so; for the ground of our difference is, that you and others deny God's law."

To which Mr. Holmes replied, with much concern, "You are deluded, and ought to be made sensible of it."

Then Mr. Hiscox answered, "You have said more than this before now, as that we have

denied Christ, and had not conscience toward God in these matters."

Upon which Mr. Holmes said, "I again say, I do judge you have and still do deny Christ, and that you have not conscience in it, for if you had, you could not have walked with us till now, but must have done otherwise, for had I been of your judgment, I must have stoned you all to death before now."

Mr. Hiscox replied, "The more wicked you would have been for your pains, for God requires no such thing of us or you."

Mr. Tory said, "that he judged that when the church had endeavored to convince them, if they remained refractory, then the church should wait awhile, and after that to declare such to be none of them."

"What!" said Mr. Hiscox, "must we be forced to walk by your legs, and see by your eyes? You may do what you please in that matter."

At that meeting, as well as at most others, they were blamed for not taking advice of the leading brethren before they stepped forward. Mr. Clarke often told Mr. Hiscox "that he stole into the practice." To which those who were in the practice of the seventh day said, "What need is there of us to come to you, since we know your judgment well enough, and that for a long time; and since the matter hath been debated in the church before all, we might wait long enough before we could have had leave given us to do that which you would not do yourselves; and though we do own the church, and the officers that God hath set there, yet God hath sometimes made known part of his will to weak ones, that others might not glory;" and by applying themselves to Mr. Tory, said "that notwithstanding that he was an elder, yet he was not perfect in his knowledge, but might stand in need of the meaneast of the church."

At that meeting, everything appeared dark, as though there was no likelihood of accommodation to be one church.

Hereupon Mr. Hiscox desired to propose something to the church, which was, that since there was an apparent difference between them, and if they could not go on as formerly, he, in behalf of the rest, desired the church seriously to consider whether it would not be more for the glory of God, and both their comforts, to let them have their liberty to walk by themselves, as they were persuaded, and so to maintain as much love as possible, seeing there is no likelihood of their agreeing.

Many, being weary of the contest, said, "It is time to set one against the other."

To which Mr. Tory replied, "I will never yield to it as long as I live; and Mr. Holmes backed the expression, "Nor I neither."

Upon which Mr. Clarke said, "What rule have you for this matter?"

Mr. Hiscox answered, "To do to others as we would they should do to us; would not you have had the same liberty at Seconk, and elsewhere, when you differed from other churches that you had walked with?"

Upon which it was answered, "That scripture was too short, for that had relation to outward things."

Mr. Hiscox—"There is that word, 'How can two walk together except they are agreed?'—we differ in matters of great weight, though you make light of them; there is that saying also, 'As many grains of wheat make one bread, so should the saints be one in heart;' and it is plain we ain't so, for some can't sit down at the table of the Lord because of us. Bro. Deuel and Mr. Mann and others say we have left Christ and gone to Moses, because we plead the morality of the ten words; others say we undervalue Christ by taking precepts from Moses."

After this debate, it was by some proposed, that though they did plead for the law, and the church did esteem it an error, whether it is such an error as to exclude a brother for.

Hereupon Bro. Wild made answer, that "they should be tender of conscience, if they walked orderly, according to Christ's last will and testament after his resurrection."

Mr. Hiscox answered, "Not the commands of Christ before his death? Ain't they as binding as those after?"

To which Mr. Tory replied, "Are they so to you?"

Mr. Hiscox answered, "The commands of my Lord are equal to me, whether before or after his death."

Hereupon Mr. Tory replied, "I am sorry for your ignorance."

After many things of this nature, and being weary of the contest, those five Sabbatarians met together to consider what they may with safety do, and answer a good conscience; whether to go on with the church as heretofore, or to declare their dissent from them, as such as did speak evil of the law; and, that since they had given them the reason of not sitting down at the table of the Lord with them, they were the more earnestly called forth in preaching against the observation of the law than before; and, instead of finding out some middle way to ease things, every affair was drove to the last extremity, by showing the law to be the first covenant, and the seventh-day Sabbath to be a sign of the covenant, and done away; and though not in express words, they were often called delinquents, yet in words implying the same; and that the church had given the first cause of grief to them. Being unwilling to separate from them, if they could be easy, after seeking the Lord, they five concluded to withdraw, since there was no hope of peace in the church while they remained. Hereupon, they chose Mr. Hiscox to be their mouth and declare this.

The next meeting, the four elders were there, though not so many others as at some other times. Mr. Clarke having sought the Lord by prayer, then Mr. Holmes informed the church that "he had something that day with weight on his heart to declare unto them; and that is," said he, "1st. Bro. Hiscox' slandering the leading brethren in saying they deny the law. 2d. His charging those four persons as apostates, saying, in his judgment, the church ought to make Bro. Hiscox see his evil in charging them so highly, or else that the church ought to look at them as such, and declare against them. 3d. It is reported that Bro. Hiscox did work one first day till meeting time, and then came and stood up in the church to speak and pray. 4th. That he hath broke bread on the seventh day of the week. 5th. That in so doing he hath held communion with such as were not owned by the church." These five things Mr. Holmes declared to have been matter of great grief to him; and hereupon called for the help of the church to deal with Mr. Hiscox for them as great evils, though he never told him of these things in the prescribed order.

Hereupon Mr. Hiscox said, "If you have done, Bro. Holmes, I shall give you answer to these things, for I am glad that I have now a time to speak to them, for I have heard that you, or some others, have spoke of such things abroad, though not to me. And as to the first, that I have slandered the leading brethren in saying they have denied the law or ten words to be a rule to us Gentiles, either before or after faith, I have so said, and do say so still, and if Bro. Holmes, or any other, do deny it, their last sin would be as bad as the first; having done it publicly and privately, should you deny it, 't would only be adding sin to sin. As to the second charge, for my calling those four persons apostates, we can look on them no better; for what is apostasy but the denial of that which persons once professed to be the mind and will of God, in a back way? Would you not count us such, if we should deny water baptism, and turn our backs upon it, and plead for the baptism of the Spirit only, as too many do at this day?"

To which Mr. Tory replied, "that if apostasy meant to deny that which persons once professed, then that most of his church are apostates."

Mr. Hiscox replied, "Look you to that; if you have done anything in the name of the Lord, and have forsoken it, then you have need to repent of it. As to the third thing Bro. Holmes said, it is grossly false; for I never in all my life came from my work to speak and pray in the church but once, and that was many years ago, and that was upon a more than ordinary occasion, when Bro. Clarke was sick;" and further said, "I cannot but wonder at you, Bro. Holmes, of whom I heard, before I saw your face, 'that you could as freely weave a yard of cloth on a first-day, before meeting, as at any other time.'"

To which Mr. Holmes replied, "Did you ever see me do it?"

"No," said Mr. Hiscox, "but I have seen you come to meeting on a first-day with your leather apron on, as if you had come from your work, which made me think it might be true; especially hearing you oftentimes say you 'knew no Sabbath but Christ.'"

(Continued on Page 45.)



## SACREDNESS OF VOWS.

THE brief but terrible history of Ananias and Sapphira is traced by the pen of inspiration for the benefit of all who profess to be the followers of Christ. This important lesson has not had sufficient weight upon the minds of our people. It will be profitable for all to thoughtfully consider the nature of the grievous offense for which these guilty ones were made an example. This one marked evidence of God's retributive justice is fearful, and should lead all to fear and tremble to repeat sins which brought such a punishment. Selfishness was the great sin which had warped the character of this guilty couple.

Ananias and his wife Sapphira were privileged with others, to hear the preaching of the gospel by the apostles. The power of God attended the word spoken, and deep conviction rested upon all present. The softening influence of the grace of God had the effect upon their hearts to cause them to release their selfish hold upon their earthly possessions. While under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, they made a pledge to give to the Lord certain lands. But when they were from under this heavenly influence, the impression was less forcible, and they began to question and draw back from fulfilling the pledge which they had made. They thought they had been too hasty, and wished to reconsider the matter. Thus a door was opened by which Satan at once entered, and gained control of their minds.

This case should be a warning to all to guard against the first approach of Satan. Covetousness was first cherished; then, ashamed to have their brethren know that their selfish souls grudged that which they had solemnly dedicated and pledged to God, deception was practiced. They talked the matter over together, and deliberately decided to withhold a part of the land. When convicted of their falsehood, their punishment was instant death. They knew that the Lord whom they had defrauded had searched them out, for Peter said, "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

A special example was necessary to guard the young church from becoming demoralized; for their numbers were rapidly increasing. A warning was thus given to all who professed Christ at that time, and to all who should afterward profess his name, that God requires faithfulness in the performance of vows. But notwithstanding this signal punishment of deception and lying, the same sins have often been repeated in the Christian church, and are widespread in our day. This example is a warning to all tempted to act in a similar manner. Selfishness and fraud are being practiced daily in the church, in withholding from God that which he claims, thus robbing him and conflicting with his arrangements to diffuse the light and knowledge of truth throughout the length and breadth of the land.

God, in his wise plans, made the advancement of his cause dependent upon the personal efforts of his people, and upon their free-will offerings. By accepting the co-operation of man in the great plan of redemption, he has placed a signal honor upon him. The minister cannot preach except he be sent. The work of dispensing light does not rest upon ministers alone. Every person, upon becoming a member of the church, pledges himself to be a representative of Jesus Christ by living out the truth he professes. The followers of Christ should carry forward the work which he left for them to do when he ascended into Heaven.

Institutions that are God's instruments to carry forward his work on earth must be sustained. Churches must be erected, schools established, and publishing houses furnished with facilities for doing a great work in the publication of the truth to be sent to all parts of the world. These institutions are ordained of God, and should be sustained by tithes and liberal offerings. As the work enlarges, means will be needed to carry it forward in all its branches. Those who have been converted to the truth, and been made partakers of his grace, may become co-workers with Christ by making voluntary sacrifices and free-will offerings to him. And when the members of the church wish in their hearts that there would be no more call for means, they virtually say that they are content that the cause of God shall not progress.

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will

be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone which is set for a pillar shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." The circumstances which prompted Jacob to vow to the Lord were similar to those which prompt men and women to vow to the Lord in our time. He had sinned in obtaining the blessing which he knew had been promised him by the sure word of God. In this he showed great lack of faith in God's power to carry out his purposes, however discouraging present appearances might be. Instead of placing himself in the position he coveted, he was obliged to flee for his life from the wrath of Esau. With only his staff in his hand, he traveled hundreds of miles through a desolate country. His courage was gone, and he was filled with remorse and timidity, seeking to avoid men lest he should be traced by his angry brother. He had not the peace of God to comfort him, for he was harassed with the thought that he had forfeited divine protection.

The second day of his journey is drawing to a close. He is weary, hungry, and homeless, and he feels that he is forsaken of God. He knows that he has brought this upon himself by his own wrong course. Dark clouds of despair inclose him, and he feels that he is an outcast. His heart is filled with a nameless terror, and he hardly dares to pray. But he is so utterly lonely that he feels the need of protection from God as he never has done before. He weeps and confesses his sin before God, and entreats for some evidence that he has not utterly forsaken him. But his burdened heart finds no relief. He has lost all confidence in himself, and he fears that the God of his fathers has cast him off. But God, the merciful God, pities the desolate, sorrow-stricken man, who gathers the stones for his pillow, and has only the canopy of heaven for his covering.

In a vision of the night he sees a mystic ladder, its base resting upon the earth, and its top reaching above the starry host, to the highest heavens. Angel messengers are ascending and descending this ladder of shining brightness, showing him the pathway of communication between earth and Heaven. A voice is heard by him, renewing the promise of mercy and protection and of future blessings. When Jacob awoke from his dream, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." He looked about him as if expecting to see the heavenly messengers; but only the dim outline of earthly objects, and the heavens above, brilliant with the gems of light, met his earnest, wondering gaze. The ladder and the bright messengers were gone, and the glorious Majesty above it he could see only in imagination.

Jacob was awed with the deep stillness of the night, and with the vivid impression that he was in the immediate presence of God. His heart was full of gratitude that he was not destroyed. There was no more sleep for him that night; gratitude deep and fervent, mingled with holy joy, filled his soul. "And Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." And here he made his solemn vow to God.

Jacob made his vow while refreshed by the dews of grace, and invigorated by the presence and assurance of God. After the divine glory had passed away, he had temptations like men in our time; but he was faithful to his vow, and would not harbor thoughts as to the possibility of being released from the pledge which he had made. He might have reasoned much as men do now, that this revelation was only a dream, that he was unduly excited when he made his vow, and that therefore it need not be kept; but he did not.

Long years intervened before Jacob dared to return to his own country; but when he did, he faithfully discharged his debt to his Master. He had become a wealthy man, and a very large amount of property passed from his possessions to the treasury of the Lord.

Many in our day fail where Jacob made a success. Those to whom God has given the greatest amount have the strongest inclination to retain what they have, because they must give a sum proportionate to their property. Jacob gave the tenth of all that he had, and then reckoned the use of the tenth, and gave the Lord the benefit of that which he had used for his own interest

during the time he was in a heathen land and could not pay his vow. This was a large amount, but he did not hesitate; that which he had vowed to God he did not regard as his, but as the Lord's. According to the amount bestowed will be the amount required. The larger the capital intrusted the more valuable is the gift which God requires to be returned to him.

If a Christian has ten or twenty thousand dollars, God's claims are imperative upon him, not only to give his proportion according to the tithing system, but to present his sin-offerings and thank-offerings to God. The Levitical dispensation was distinguished in a remarkable manner by the sanctification of property. When we speak of the tithe as the standard of the Jewish contributions to religious purposes, we do not speak understandingly. The Lord kept his claims paramount, and in almost every article they were reminded of the Giver by being required to make returns to him. They were required to pay a ransom for their first-born son, for the first-fruits of their flocks, and for the first-gathering of the harvest. They were required to leave the corners of their harvest-fields for the destitute. Whatever dropped from their hands in reaping was left for the poor, and once in every seven years their lands were allowed to produce spontaneously for the needy. Then there were the sacrificial offerings, the trespass-offerings, the sin-offerings, and the remission of all debts every seventh year. There were also numerous expenses for hospitalities and gifts to the poor, and there were assessments upon their property.

At stated periods, in order to preserve the integrity of the law, the people were interviewed as to whether they had faithfully performed their vows or not. A conscientious few made returns to God of about one-third of all their income for the benefit of religious interests and for the poor. These exactions were not from a particular class of the people, but from *all*, the requirement being proportioned according to the amount possessed. Besides all these systematic and regular donations, there were special objects calling for free-will offerings, such as the tabernacle built in the wilderness, and the temple erected at Jerusalem. These draughts were made by God upon the people for their own good, as well as to sustain the service of God. There must be an awakening among us as a people upon this matter.

There are but few men who feel conscience-stricken if they neglect their duty in beneficence. But few feel remorse of soul because they are daily robbing God. If a Christian deliberately or accidentally underpays his neighbor, or refuses to cancel an honest debt, his conscience, unless seared, will trouble him; he cannot rest although no one may know but himself. There are many neglected vows and unpaid pledges, and yet how few trouble their minds over the matter; how few feel the guilt of this violation of duty. We must have new and deeper convictions on this subject. The conscience must be aroused, and the matter receive earnest attention; for an account must be rendered to God in the last day, and his claims must be settled.

The responsibilities of the Christian business man, however large or small his capital, will be in exact proportion to his gifts from God. The deceitfulness of riches has ruined thousands and tens of thousands. These wealthy men forget that they are stewards, and that the day is fast approaching when it shall be said to them, "Give an account of thy stewardship." As is shown by the parable of the talents, every man is responsible for the wise use of the gifts bestowed. The poor man in the parable, because he had the least gift, felt the least responsibility, and made no use of the talent intrusted to him; therefore he was cast into outer darkness.

Said Christ, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And his disciples were astonished at his doctrine. When a minister who has labored successfully in securing souls to Jesus Christ, abandons his sacred work in order to secure temporal gain, he is called an apostate, and he will be held accountable to God for the talents that he has misapplied. When men of business, farmers, mechanics, merchants, lawyers, etc., become members of the church, they become servants of Jesus Christ; and although their talents may be entirely different, their responsibility to advance the cause of God by personal effort, and with their means, is no less than that which rests upon the minister. The woe which will fall upon the minister if he



preach not the gospel, will just as surely fall upon the business man if he, with his different talents, will not be a co-worker with Christ in accomplishing the same results. When this is brought home to the individual, some will say, "This is a hard saying;" nevertheless it is true, although continually contradicted by the practice of men who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ.

God provided bread for his people in the wilderness by a miracle of his mercy, and he could have provided everything necessary for religious service. But he did not, because in his infinite wisdom he saw that the moral discipline of his people depended upon their co-operating with him, every one of them doing something. As long as the truth is progressive, the claims of God are upon men to give of that which he has intrusted to them for this very purpose. God, the creator of man, by instituting the plan of systematic benevolence has made the work to bear equally upon all according to their several abilities. Every one is to be his own assessor, and is left to give as he purposes in his heart. But there are those who are guilty of the same sin as Ananias and Sapphira, thinking that if they withhold a portion of what God claims in the tithing system, the brethren will never know it. Thus thought the guilty couple whose example is given us as a warning. God in this case evidenced that he searches the heart. The motives and purposes of man cannot be hidden from him. He has left a perpetual warning to Christians of all ages to beware of the sin to which the hearts of men are continually inclined.

Although no visible marks of God's displeasure follow the repetition of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira now, yet the sin is just as heinous in the sight of God, and will as surely be visited upon the transgressor in the day of Judgment; many will feel the curse of God even in this life. When a pledge is made to the cause, it is a vow made to God, and should be sacredly kept. In the sight of God it is no better than sacrilege to appropriate to our own use that which has been once pledged to advance his sacred work.

When a verbal or written pledge has been made in the presence of our brethren, to give a certain amount, they are the visible witnesses of a contract made between us and God. The pledge is not made to man, but to God; and is as a written note given to a neighbor. No legal bond is more binding upon the Christian for the payment of money, than a pledge made to God.

Persons who thus pledge to their fellow-men, do not generally think of asking to be released from their pledges. A vow made to God, the giver of all favors, is of still greater importance; then why should we seek to be released from our vows to God? Will man consider his promise less binding because made to God? Because his vow will not be put to trial in courts of justice, is it less valid? Will a man who professes to be saved by the blood of the infinite sacrifice of Jesus Christ, "rob God?" Are not his vows and his actions weighed in the balance of justice in the heavenly courts?

Each of us has a case pending in the court of Heaven. Shall our course of conduct balance the evidence against us? The case of Ananias and Sapphira was of the most aggravated character. In keeping back part of the price they lied to the Holy Ghost. Guilt likewise rests upon every individual in proportion to like offenses. When the hearts of men are softened by the presence of the Spirit of God, they are more susceptible to the impressions of the Holy Spirit, and resolves are made to deny self and to sacrifice for the cause of God. It is when divine light shines into the chambers of the mind with unusual clearness and power, that the feelings of the natural man are overcome, that selfishness loses its power upon the heart, and that desires are awakened to imitate the Pattern, Jesus Christ, in practicing self-denial and benevolence. The disposition of the naturally selfish man then becomes kind and pitiful toward lost sinners, and he makes a solemn pledge to God, as did Abraham and Jacob. Heavenly angels are present on such occasions. The love of God and love for souls triumphs over selfishness and love of the world. Especially is this the case when the speaker, with the Spirit and power of God, presents the plan of redemption, laid by the Majesty of Heaven in the sacrifice of the cross. By the following scriptures we may see how God regards the subject of vows:—

"Then Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is

the thing which the Lord hath commanded. If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth. Num. 30:1, 2. "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error; wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands?" Eccl. 5:6. "I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble." Ps. 66:13, 14. "It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make inquiry." Prov. 20:25.

"When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a free-will offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth." Deut. 23:21-23.

"Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God; let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared." Ps. 76:11. "But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord. But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen." Mal. 1:12-14.

"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou vowest. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay." Eccl. 5:4, 5.

God has given man a part to act in accomplishing the salvation of his fellow-men. He can work in connection with Christ by doing acts of mercy and beneficence. But he cannot redeem them, not being able to satisfy the claims of insulted justice. This the Son of God alone could do, by laying aside his honor and glory, clothing his divinity with humanity, and coming to earth to humiliate himself, and shed his blood in behalf of the human race.

In commissioning his disciples to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Christ assigned to men the work of spreading the gospel. But while some go forth to preach, he calls upon others to answer to his claims upon them for tithes and offerings with which to support the ministry, and to spread the printed truth all over the land. This is God's means of exalting man. It is just the work which he needs; for it will stir the deepest sympathies of his heart, and call into exercise the highest capabilities of the mind.

Every good thing of earth was placed here by the bountiful hand of God, as an expression of his love to man. The poor are his, and the cause of religion is his. He has placed means in the hands of men, that his divine gifts may flow through human channels in doing the work appointed us in saving our fellow-men. Every one has his appointed work in the great field; and yet none should receive the idea that God is dependent upon man. He could speak the word, and every son of poverty would be made rich. In a moment of time, he could heal the human race of all their diseases. He might dispense with ministers altogether, and make angels the ambassadors of his truth. He might have written the truth upon the firmament, or imprinted it upon the leaves of the trees and upon the flowers of the field; or he might with an audible voice have proclaimed it from Heaven. But the all-wise God did not choose any of these ways. He knew that man must have something to do in order that life might be a blessing to him. The gold and silver are the Lord's, and he could rain it from Heaven if he chose; but instead of this he has made man his steward, intrusting him with means not to hoard, but to use to benefit others. He thus makes man the medium through which to distribute his blessings on earth. God planned the system of beneficence, in order that man might become, like his Creator, benevolent and unselfish

in character, and finally be a partaker with him of the eternal, glorious reward.

God works through human instrumentalities; and whoever shall awaken the consciences of men, provoking them to good works and a real interest in the advancement of the cause of truth, does not do it of himself, but by the Spirit of God which worketh in him. Pledges made under these circumstances are of a sacred character, being the fruit of the work of the Spirit of God. When these pledges are canceled, Heaven accepts the offering, and these liberal workers are credited for so much treasure invested in the bank of Heaven. Such are laying up a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

But when the immediate presence of the Spirit of God is not so vividly felt, and the mind becomes exercised in the temporal concerns of life, then they are tempted to question the force of the obligation which they voluntarily assumed; and, yielding to Satan's suggestions, they reason that undue pressure was brought to bear upon them, and that they acted under the excitement of the occasion; that the demand for means to use in the cause of God was overstated, and that under false pretenses they were induced to pledge, without fully understanding the subject, and therefore they wish to be released. Have ministers the power to except the excuses, and say, "You shall not be holden to your pledge; you are released from your vow?" If they venture to do this, they become partakers of the sin of which the withholders are guilty.

Of all our income we should make the first appropriation to God. In the system of beneficence enjoined upon the Jews, they were required either to bring to the Lord the first of all his gifts, whether in the increase of their flocks or their herds, or in the produce of their fields, orchards, or vineyards, or they were to redeem it by substituting an equivalent. How changed the order of things in our day! The Lord's requirements and claims, if they receive any attention, are left till the last. Our work needs tenfold more means now than was needed by the Jews. The great commission given to the apostles was to go throughout the world, and preach the gospel. This shows the extension of the work, and the increased responsibility resting upon the followers of Christ in our day. If the law required tithes and offerings thousands of years ago, how much more essential are they now! If the rich and poor were to give a sum proportionate to their property in the Jewish economy, it is doubly essential now.

The majority of professed Christians part with their means with great reluctance. Many of them do not give one-twentieth of their income to God, and many give far less than that; while there is a large class who rob God of the little tithe, and others who will give only the tithe. If all the tithes of our people flowed into the treasury of the Lord as they should, such blessings would be received that gifts and offerings for sacred purposes would be multiplied tenfold, and thus the channel between God and man would be kept open. The followers of Christ should not wait for thrilling missionary appeals to arouse them to action. If spiritually awake, they would hear in the income of every week, whether much or little, the voice of God and conscience with authority demanding the tithes and offerings due the Lord.

Not only are the gifts and labors of Christ's followers desired, but in one sense they are indispensable. All Heaven is interested in the salvation of man, and waiting for men to become interested in their own salvation and in that of their fellow-men. All things are ready, but the church is apparently upon the enchanted ground. When they shall arouse, and their prayers, their wealth, and all their energies and resources be laid at the feet of Jesus, the cause of truth will triumph. Angels are amazed that Christians do so little, when such an example has been given them by Jesus, who even withheld not himself from death,—a shameful death. It is a marvel to them that when professors come in contact with the selfishness of the world they should fall back to their narrow views and selfish motives.

One of the greatest sins in the Christian world of to-day, is dissembling and covetousness in dealing with God. There is an increasing carelessness on the part of many in regard to meeting their pledges to the various institutions and religious enterprises. Many look upon the act of pledging as though it imposed no obligation to



pay. If they think that their money will bring them considerable profits by being invested in bank stock or in merchandise, or if there are individuals connected with the institution which they have pledged to help to whom they take exceptions, they feel perfectly free to use their means as they please. This lack of integrity is prevailing to quite an extent among those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God, and looking for the soon appearing of their Lord and Saviour.

The plan of systematic benevolence was of God's own arrangement; but the faithful payment of God's claims is often refused or postponed, as if solemn promises were of no significance. It is because church-members neglect to pay their tithes and meet their pledges that our institutions are not free from embarrassment. If all, both rich and poor, would bring their tithes into the store-house, there would be a sufficient supply of means to release the cause from financial embarrassment, and to nobly carry forward the missionary work in its various departments. God calls upon those who believe the truth to render to him the things that are his. Those who have thought that to withhold from God is gain, will eventually experience the curse of God as the result of their robbery of the Lord. Nothing but utter inability to pay can excuse one in neglecting to meet promptly his obligations to the Lord. Indifference in this matter shows that you are in blindness and deception, and are unworthy of the name of a Christian.

A church is responsible for the pledges of its individual members. If they see that there is a brother who is neglecting to fulfill his vows, they should labor with him kindly but plainly. If he is not in circumstances which render it possible for him to pay his vow, and he is a worthy member and has a willing heart, then let the church compassionately help him. Thus they can bridge over the difficulty, and receive a blessing themselves.

God would have the members of his church consider their obligations to him as binding as their indebtedness to the merchant or the market. Let every one review his past life and see if any unpaid, unredeemed pledges have been neglected, and then make extra exertions to pay the "uttermost farthing;" for we must all meet and abide the final issue of a tribunal where nothing will stand the test but integrity and veracity.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

#### BLOOMFIELD, OHIO.

JANUARY 2, came to this place. Though there is a large church here, yet they are so widely scattered that but few usually meet together. The weather and roads were very bad, hence the attendance was small, only about a dozen. We attended to the usual business of a church quarterly meeting. All spoke, giving encouraging testimonies. Those who made a start when I was here last spring are doing well. Bro. Underwood had formed a temperance club before I came. Though they had already used several hundred Annuals, yet they took over three hundred more. Each member also became responsible for obtaining a given number of subscribers for *Good Health*, amounting in all to one hundred. Each person will give more or less time to canvassing for our periodicals. The T. and M. reports showed a large improvement over last quarter. Their society is out of debt, with a large stock on hand and money in the treasury. This is the way it ought to be with each church.

D. M. CANRIGHT.

#### SEATONVILLE, KENTUCKY.

I HAVE been in this place about three weeks. Twelve came out on the Sabbath, but the opposition has been so bitter that four have given up. We still hope for others. The weather has been very unfavorable, but we have lost no time.

January 5.

S. OSBURN.

#### MARTINVILLE, ILLINOIS.

ELDER MORRISON and myself held meetings here four weeks, in the Disciple house, which was rented for the occasion. Eld. R. F. Andrews came to assist us. The attendance was good the most of the time. Five are keeping the Sabbath, one has joined the church, and three the Sabbath-school. The church here is in a prosperous condition; harmony prevails.

January 11.

J. B. LOGAN.

#### MICHIGAN.

BETWEEN January 1 and 15, I visited the Ransom Center, Jefferson, Hillsdale, and Quincy, churches. Most of my time was spent with the first two. Both of these have in years past been subjected to very severe trials; but we think there are evident tokens that God, through his providence, has been steadily working for their deliverance. While with them, we organized in each a health and temperance club, and were much encouraged by the disposition manifested to enter heartily into the temperance work. I spoke also on the temperance question on my return trip, in both Hillsdale and Quincy. In the former place enough signers were obtained for a club; but I did not have time to complete the organization of the same. In the latter place I found a club already in existence, and endeavored to encourage them to prosecute the work with vigor.

W. H. LITTLEJOHN.

#### PLAINFIELD, WISCONSIN.

JANUARY 10, 11, I held a quarterly meeting with the Plainfield church. Our meetings were especially blessed of the Lord. A number expressed a wish to become members of the church. We had a good T. and M. session. The meetings here closed on Monday evening with a temperance lecture. The house was crowded. A temperance club of thirty-four members was organized; thirty of these signed the teetotal pledge, and twenty became full members by paying the initiation fee. A leader and clerk were elected.

N. M. JORDAN.

#### HOW ONE DRUNKARD WAS MADE.

It was done in the usual way, with this difference (to me, at least), I saw it done. Had I known the end from the beginning, I should have raised a warning cry. Who would not? Was not the drunkard's end, when the wine which "moveth itself aright" is biting like a serpent and stinging like an adder, what I had always looked at? But one day the beginning and the end of his course was set over against each other in such a way that I seemed to see the picture as a vision. There was Satan, the great enemy of souls, spreading his first fatal snare; but it was not in a dram shop, as one might suppose. And there, too, was his most carefully chosen instrument, a fair, thoughtless woman, standing, I plainly saw, as much in the shadow of God's displeasure as the evil companions to whom the world gave all the blame.

It was a dark picture, but at that time and in that instance, the chief sorrow to me was not so much that here was another image of God defaced and brutalized by rum, but another and more startling thought: "Could I have hindered this? Need this have been here for angels to weep over, and demons to mock at?"

To go back ten years and more, that you may see it all as I did.

It was New Year's day, 186— A storm had been raging outside since morning, but we who had gathered in Mrs. C.'s beautiful parlor knew nothing of bitter wind and sleet, except that we had fewer callers than usual. But those who came seemed to be all the merrier for having less of a crowd. The bright fire glowed in hospitable welcome on the hearth for winter cheer, and one might forget in the bloom and fragrance of the flowers that brightened the room everywhere that it was not summer time and summer weather.

I remember the scene so well. The happy young faces, the gay dresses, the songs with which we filled the intervals, the tables so loaded with dainties, and the friends about it who came into the sunshine of that pleasant home with wishes for us all of a "Happy New Year."

Just at nightfall, a group of young men entered, and among them was Dr. Richard L., a particular friend of the C.'s, a young man of whom I knew very little beyond the very evident fact that he was handsome, intelligent, and wonderfully popular. He had been looked for all day, and now that he was come, every one was all attention when his cherry voice was heard.

"You are welcome as flowers in May," said Martha C., extending her hand with an old friend's greeting, "but how could you stay away so long?"

"So that the best should come last," he said gaily. "I think I'll crown my New Year wish with one for your health and happiness, Miss Martha."

"Not till you have pledged me in this," she answered, turning as she spoke to a decanter, that until then I had not seen among the flowers on the table, to fill a delicate bubble of a glass to the brim with wine.

"Thank you, Miss Martha. Will you excuse me if I say that I have been out all day and have not come to that yet?"

There was something in his tone, some self-assertion in his manner, that seemed to rouse in Martha a desire to show the influence she had over this young man. Her little hand was still holding the glass toward him.

"Ah, indeed! Then you are the more ready to take it now, Richard."

"What if he never takes wine?" suggested a friend who stood by watching the young man in what he thought, and rightly too, was a dilemma.

"Oh, that's nothing," said Martha, lightly. "You will take it for me. Just this once, Richard?"

I shuddered at her persistency, for a thought of the serpent that might lie coiled within that cup flashed upon me. She was near enough for me to put my hand on hers. Would she bear a check from me? I thought she would; but while I stopped to parley with the doubt, and to balance friendship with duty, the time for action had passed.

"Just this once," echoed Richard, blushing as he took the glass, without a smile, from her hand. "Here's wishing you many happy returns of the day."

I turned away, chilled with disappointment over his lack of courage, and pained, too, with that question of my own duty in the case. But after events hinged on that night's doings have forever settled the question of all such doubts for me.

A little over two years after this, I sat, one Summer day, by a friend's open window. We were talking of this and that, as we bent over our sewing together, when a loud knocking across the street aroused us both. We saw a man standing at a door whereon a doctor's sign was conspicuously displayed.

"He need not wait there," said Alice, gravely. "Dr. L. ought to put up a notice, 'No patients wanted here.' He has been lying there dead drunk for hours. My husband says he has been in that disgusting condition for two days, only waking to get more liquor, which he keeps on the stand beside him. The poor fellow seems bent on killing himself."

"It is not possible," I exclaimed, "that this Dr. L. is Martha C.'s old friend?"

"The very same," said Alice.

"But," said I, still unwilling to believe it, "I heard it said that he never takes wine, at least but seldom;" for then the memory of his words, "Just this once," came back to me as they sounded that night.

"I cannot say how that is," said Alice. "I only know that two years ago last New Year's night he was carried home drunk for the first time in his life. He has been going down, down ever since, has been turned out of home and church, and any day we may hear of a coroner's inquest over a man found dead in his office."

So I had seen one drunkard made. That glass I had seen Richard L. put to his lips was said to be his first, and it ruined him. In sight of that closed door, and remembering the poor, debased victim inside, I resolved, God helping me, never again to stand by while the tempter snared another soul, even though the hand and voice of friend were enlisted in this unholy service.—*Christian Weekly.*

BE REAL.—Canon Kingsley says, "Whatsoever is not simple, whatsoever is affected, boastful, willful, covetous, tarnishes, even destroys, the heroic character of a deed, because all these faults spring out of self. On the other hand, wherever you find a perfectly simple, frank, unconscious character, there you have the possibility at least, of heroic action. For it is nobler far to do the most common-place duty in the household, or behind the counter, with a single eye to duty, because it must be done; nobler far, I say, than to go out of your way to attempt a brilliant deed with a double mind, and saying to yourself not only 'this will be a brilliant deed,' but also, 'and it will pay me, or raise me, or set me off, into the bargain.'"

ASSOCIATE not with the wicked man, even if thou canst learn from him.



## THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, JANUARY 29, 1880.

## ILLNESS OF ELDER WAGGONER.

We hear from St. Helena that Elder Waggoner was taken with a severe attack of rheumatism Sabbath morning, the 24th, but was able to preach the dedication sermon in the St. Helena church on Sunday afternoon. Since then he is reported not as well. Cannot tell when he will be able to return to Oakland. He is remembered in the fervent prayers of this church.

The latest intelligence is by postal card, dated the 27th, from Bro. Creamer, at whose residence he is stopping, which states: "I cannot report Bro. W. any better, but weaker than when I wrote yesterday. We tried to give him some treatment last night, but he fainted under it, so that we had to relinquish it. He does not sit up any at all."

## TITHING.

It is encouraging to learn of conscientious individuals, here and there, who, although not church members, are ready to acknowledge the Lord's right to a tithe. These "do by nature the deeds of the law," and are worthy exemplars for those who profess to believe the prophecies concerning the last days and claim to accept the "present truth," but find excuses for disobeying the Master's will, and continue to rob him "of tithes and offerings."

We are in receipt of a letter from Maine, the writer of which is evidently not a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church, or he would have paid his tithe to the Maine Conference, which contains this acknowledgment: "Having become convinced that the tithing system is lawful and right, by your kind and welcome paper, the *Sixers*, and also the Holy Bible, you will find enclosed fourteen dollars and fifty cents tithing money."

A brother of this city recently became acquainted with a prominent business man in San Francisco who, although not being a member of any church, has for years regularly laid by one-tenth of his income for the Lord's cause, to be appropriated in such manner as he should become convinced would most advance the interests of that cause.

Another case is that of a lady in this city who has for a number of years systematically set aside a portion of her means for the support of the ministry. Although not a church member, she is thoroughly imbued with the idea that, receiving all from the Lord, a part is certainly due him in return.

These are but isolated cases, and no doubt there are many others who would be like-minded were the subject properly presented before them.

## CALIFORNIA T. AND M. DISTRICTS.

As there have been many changes made in the boundaries of the districts in this State since the Tract and Missionary Society was organized, we give them as they now exist:—

District No. 1 embraces the counties of Sonoma, Marin, Mendocino, Humboldt, Trinity and Del Norte.

No. 2—Fresno, Tulare, Inyo, Merced and San Benito.

No. 3—Napa, Lake, and that portion of Solano county lying south of Bridgeport.

No. 4—San Diego.

No. 5—Yolo, Colusa, Sacramento, Sutter, Yuba, Placer, Nevada, El Dorado, Amador, and that portion of Solano county lying north of Bridgeport.

No. 6—Tehama, Butte, Shasta, Siskiyou, Modoc, Lassen, Plumas and Sierra.

No. 7—Alameda, Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Calaveras, Alpine, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Mono and Mariposa.

No. 8—San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Kern and Santa Clara.

No. 9—Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Ventura.

It will be found convenient for both officers and members to preserve this for reference.

BARBARA C. STICKNEY.

BLESSED be he who gives to the poor, albeit only a penny; doubly blessed be he who adds kind words to his gift.

## ITEMS OF NEWS.

—Naples has been visited by a snow-storm.

—A terrible famine prevails in Adrianople.

—Minister Noyes wants to come home from France.

—New York put \$22,000,000 into new buildings in 1879.

—The distress in Ireland is intensified by a severe frost.

—Holland and Poland have suffered from inundations.

—Garibaldi was married at Caprera on the 26th instant.

—The Princess Louise has sailed from Liverpool for Halifax.

—The German Bundesrath has voted for an increase in the army.

—The Hudson River tunnel from New York to Jersey City is in progress.

—Philadelphia's debt, less stocks, bonds and other assets, is \$46,546,222.

—The Cuban insurgents are becoming discouraged, and are surrendering.

—The cable brings us the rumor that England will intervene between Chile and Peru.

—Severe earthquake shocks are reported to have taken place in San Salvador, Central America.

—The St. Petersburg *Golos* announces the concentration of a large Chinese force on the Kuldja frontier.

—It is announced that the German government intends to levy a tax on advertisements in newspapers.

—A general snow-fall visited California on the 20th. Snow fell in the streets of San Francisco and Oakland.

—A party of sixty masked men lately lynched a negro in Winchester, Va., for seduction and miscegenation.

—By the recent earthquake shocks in Cuba, the public buildings of San Cristobal are reported to be in ruins.

—General Grant's visit to Cuba was co-incidental with a severe earthquake. The Havanese were greatly terrified.

—Congressman Money, of Mississippi, hopes that the exodus will continue until every negro has left the South.

—The Montenegrins have withdrawn from Gusinje, and their campaign against the Albanians is at an end for the winter.

—Lane Emmons, town treasurer of Everett, Mass., has disappeared co-incidentally with \$23,000 of the people's money.

—Heavy defalcations by its book-keeper has caused the suspension of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Bank of New York.

—Lieut. Bonaparte Wyse gets \$1,000,000 for transferring to De Lesseps his canal franchise from the Columbian government.

—By a snow-slide on the Sierras, Jan. 18th, a cattle train was thrown from the track, and three and a half car-loads of cattle killed.

—General Lucius Fairchild, consul at Paris, has been appointed minister to Spain, vice James Russell Lowell, appointed to the Court of St. James.

—French scientists and electricians are generally of the opinion that Edison has made an important advance in the matter of electric lighting.

—The discovery of excavations in a number of houses in Odessa lead the police of that city to the belief that the Nihilists are undermining portions of the place.

—A rumor comes from Philadelphia that personal friends of General Grant are authorized to withdraw his name from the list of possible Presidential candidates.

—A telephone line is in successful operation between Omaha and St. Louis, a distance of 410 miles. Every note of a tune sung in St. Louis is plainly audible in Omaha.

—Fifteen Texas "cow-boys," belonging to a party of several hundred, camped near Las Vegas, New Mexico, entered that town and killed the city marshal and two citizens, and wounded five others.

—By the burning of the steamboat *Charmar* fifteen miles above the mouth of Red river, eight lives were lost. The boat and cargo of 2,100 bales of cotton, valued at \$130,000, are a total loss.

—Gladstone announces that from his seat in parliament he shall advocate a general European disarmament. General Grant and Bismarck are said to believe in the practicability of such a policy.

—The shoe shop in the Kings County, New York, penitentiary was burned January 26th. The building cost \$100,000. The Bay State Shoe and Leather Co. lost a stock of leather valued at \$200,000; insured fully.

—The appointment of James Russell Lowell as Minister to England is very favorably received by the English journals. One London journal makes the amusing error of crediting him with the authorship of "Thanatopsis."

—The dead-lock in Maine still continues. As the Fusionist cause weakens they become desperate. The Republicans have called out State troops to protect the State-house, they claiming to have discovered Fusionist plots which justify them in this course.

—The fatal wounding of a Liberal journalist by a Hungarian nobleman in a duel, has resulted in serious riots, at Pesth, Hungary.

—A terrible explosion occurred in the Lycett Colliery, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, Jan. 21st, resulting in the death of some 70 miners. Fire-damp was the cause of the accident.

—The New York police have been actively raiding dance-houses and other disreputable resorts. A notorious resort, known as the Hotel Mabile, was raided on the night of the 17th instant, and 300 men and 100 women were taken prisoners and marched to the station-houses.

—The dispatch boat *Lively*, with the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh on board, collided with the British ship *Arnott Lyle*, as it was returning from the *Sarmatia*, whither their highnesses had been to bid farewell to the Princess Louise. The party were taken off in safety.

—A visionary scheme is now before Congress to secure the proper authorization for the construction of a railroad from the United States through Mexico, Central America, and the South American republics. The line would be some 4,500 miles in length; 1,200 through temperate, and 3,250 through tropical regions. No estimate as to the cost has been given.

—On Jan. 24, an engine on the New York elevated railway, which was running at the rate of thirty miles an hour, was thrown from the track by a misplaced switch and fell to the street below, a distance of twenty-five feet, landing squarely on its wheels. The single car which it was drawing remained on the track. The engineer, fireman, and conductor, who were in the cab of the engine, were severely but not fatally injured.

—A Congregational minister in London, England, Mr. Williams, has addressed the other ministers of the denomination in a pamphlet, in which he urges that special prayer shall be made for the conversion of the devil. Men are saved by preaching; perhaps Mr. W. will consent to go and preach to the devil. We shall not be surprised if his conversion is soon announced.

—The population of our globe, estimated at about thirteen hundred millions, is ruled by 12 Emperors, 25 Kings, 47 Princes, 17 Sultans, 12 Khans, 6 Grand Dukes, 6 Dukes, 1 Vice-king, 1 Nizam, 1 Radai, 1 Imam, 1 Bey, and 28 Presidents, besides a large number of Chiefs of wild tribes. Of the Republics, nineteen are found on American soil, leaving only nine for the rest of the world.

It is much easier to urge another to undertake a perilous adventure than it is to undertake it yourself. It is said that Sir James Mackintosh and Dr. Parr were one day riding together, when for some reason the horse became very restive, threatening to overturn the carriage. Dr. Parr was quite timid, and said: "Handle him gently, Jemmy; don't irritate him; always soothe your horse, Jemmy. Just let me down; I am in your way, I fear." When safely on terra firma, however, the case seemed to assume different proportions. "Now then," cried the Doctor, "now then, Jemmy, touch him up. Never let a horse get the better of you. Touch him up, Jemmy, and I'll walk home."

## BUSINESS DEPARTMENT.

"Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully," (margin, negligently). Jer. 48:10.

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A Friend of the Cause 14.20.



(Continued from Page 40.)

By the time he had so far proceeded, there was so much disorder in the meeting, that the other things were not spoke to.

Upon which Mr. Hiscox desired to offer some scriptures to prove that it was lawful to set precepts of holiness from the Old Testament, as that of Peter, "Be ye holy, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy," and some other places.

Hereupon Mr. Clarke said, "You undervalue the Son to take precepts from the servant."

Mr. Tory then said to the church, "that he thought they had spent time enough with Mr. Hiscox," &c.

All these left the church, Dec. 7, 1671.

### HUMILIATIONS. April 1884

THESE are not pleasant, but they are very profitable. They give us true views of ourselves. They help us to find our right place. They serve to show what manner of spirit we are of. Some persons profess to serve God, when a secret desire for promotion is the mainspring of their zeal in his cause. How much better that such persons should meet with humiliating disappointments than that they should be apparently successful. The effect will be to cause a decided change. They will discover the baseness of the motives that have prompted them to activity in the cause of Christ, or if they do not, they will forsake that course in disgust at their failure to procure promotion. Not so with those who love our Lord in sincerity. The humblest place in the house of God will be by them preferred to the highest exaltation that the service of sin, of self, and of the world, can give.

Welcome to humiliations. They are like our Lord's crown of thorns, painful to wear, and sure to be the occasion of many blows upon our heads from the reeds in the hands of our enemies. But they are a mark of honor, as well as abasement. They indicate our willingness to suffer with Christ. They evince our willingness to bear the cross of Christ. They are a part of our badge of discipleship. Faith esteems them, though at present sharp and painful, as of more value than all the treasures of earth; for it looks forward through the telescope of God's word to the time when the crown of thorns shall be changed into a crown of inexpressible loveliness, and of priceless value. Then every thorn will become a ray of glory, and every pang of anguish be changed to joy unutterable. Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome the shame, the pain, the humiliation! Welcome the humble life of Christ's disciples, and welcome at last their infinite reward!

J. N. A.

### THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE.

"YE were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you; being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Rom. 6:17, 18.

True conversion is a change from sin to righteousness. It is not exemption from service, but a change of masters. It is ceasing to be the "servants of sin," and becoming "servants of God." "His servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." And since "all uprightness is sin," and "sin is the transgression of the law," it is a change from transgression of the law of God to obedience of the same.

The text teaches us how and when this change is affected. The first thing required is obedience; ye obeyed. And it is not merely an outward obedience to a form, but it must be a sincere heart obedience; ye obeyed from the heart. But yet the form is of importance as a testimony to the obedience of the heart. There needs be some outward manifestation of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," else the Lord would not have instituted it.

What is the form? This is an important question; for when it is truly obeyed the sinner is made free from sin. The form of a thing is not the thing itself, but a likeness or resemblance of it; hence the form of a doctrine is an image, model, or figurative representation of it. This leads to the question, What is the great central and all important doctrine of the gospel of salvation from sin? It is "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." This was "first of all" in the gospel that Paul preached. See 1 Cor. 15:1-4. The

fundamental doctrine of the gospel is the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ. All depends upon these facts. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain;" and the sinner is not delivered; "ye are yet in your sins."

The form is something to be obeyed; and it is a likeness or resemblance of the doctrine. Christ died for our sins. The sinner in order to be forgiven, must die to sin. To die to sin is to live no longer therein—to cease sinning, that is, cease transgressing the law of God. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein." This is a vital point; hence the apostle lays great stress on it. He teaches that we shall be in the likeness of Christ's resurrection; but we must be sure of one thing as a condition, and that is, that the old man is dead. "Knowing this," says he, "that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

We do not bury our friends till we feel sure that they are dead; but when we know they are dead we immediately prepare to bury them. So when the sinner is slain by the law, in other words, feels the justice of that law which condemns him to death as its transgressor, and voluntarily dies to sin to live no longer in it, then he may be buried in the likeness of Christ, which is the next thing in the form. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

In these acts of obedience, we have the form or resemblance of the work of Christ, on which our salvation from sin depends. The form closely resembles the doctrine—it has a death, a burial, and a resurrection to a new life. The old life was a life of sin; the new is a life of holiness. Whoever obeys from the heart this form of doctrine is made free from sin, and becomes the servant of righteousness; and this new life persevered in will end in life everlasting. "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In chap. 7 the apostle slightly changes the figure, representing the "old man," the "body of sin," the "carnal mind," as the person himself; and he is said to be slain by the law, because of sin, or through its agency; and by faith in Christ he becomes "dead to the law;" the law having put Christ to death, instead of him; and thus he sees himself put to death by the law in the person of Christ, delivered from sin, condemnation, and death, and given a new life in union with him, being married to him who was raised from the dead. He is "delivered from the law, that (sin) being dead wherein he was held" in condemnation.

These are figures, the literality of which is "repentance toward God," whose law we have violated, and "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," who has suffered the penalty for us, and offers us pardon. It is plainly and literally expressed in the great and comprehensive command, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Those who obey this form of doctrine heartily and entirely, becoming truly "dead to sin" by genuine repentance toward God, and by faith in him who died for our sins, was buried, and rose again, are buried in the likeness of his death, arising to walk in newness of life, shall then be made free from sin and become servants of righteousness; and by abiding in him, and continuing to walk in this new life of obedience to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ, they shall, when Christ shall appear the second time, be like him, and enter into the joys of eternal life. May this be the portion of the reader and the writer.

R. F. COTTRELL.

Who is powerful? He who can control his passion. Who is rich? He who is contented with what he has.

### PRAYER. April 1884

PRAYER implies the attention of the Almighty to our petitions, and that he has power to grant them. We cannot pray to a machine; no more can we pray to a god who is shut out of the universe and restrained from any direct participation in human affairs by pre-established laws. A god who is entombed in creation, who has no existence separate from his works,—the god of Pantheism—is not a god who can hear and answer prayer. Nor can we pray intelligently to an unknown and unknowable god. If god is only a name for an unknown force, or for the moral order of the universe, prayer becomes irrational and impossible, for "of what avail is it for any man to pray if God has given over the line of his life to the control of law, which has no love, no sympathy, and no power to hear and answer, when he prays?" Wherefore, the possibility of intelligent and availing prayer implies that God is a personal, extra-mundane, and yet omnipresent being, independent of the world, almighty in power, having complete control over all the operations of nature.

Moreover, prayer implies the loving interest and care of God, that he has the disposition and the ability to do for us that which is best. For he is our Father, whose love for us is infinitely greater than that of earthly parents for their children. And if men, who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto their children, how much more shall our Heavenly Father, who is infinitely wise and good and loving give the best things to them that trust him? The very word Father, with which every petition begins, carries in it ample assurance that he will always do that which is best for us.

This assurance that God's will is best for us, and that he will certainly do it, is an essential element of all availing prayer. It is indispensable to faith. No man can have entire faith in God, can trust him with all his heart, who cannot say with perfect acquiescence, "Thy will be done." For this language of submission is also the language of trust, of filial confidence, which says: "I do not know what is best for me, but God, my Father, does, and though his will may be painful for me to do or endure, yet I know it is for my good, therefore I will trust him; 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.'" "Not as I wish, but as thou wilt." Manifestly, if a man does not have enough confidence in the wisdom, goodness, and power of God to believe that his will is best, and that he can work his will in all things, he cannot trust him, and therefore cannot pray with faith.

It follows that whenever we pray, and for whatever we pray, we must, if we would receive the highest benefit from our prayers, be able to say from the heart: "Thy will be done." This is the essential condition of effectual prayer. And wisely so. It would be a singular theory of prayer to say that God will answer an imperious or unsubmissive request, in which a soul says: "God, give me this desire—spare the life of my loved one—I must have it; I cannot be resigned without it." How much more effectual a prayer like that of the Saviour: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." "And there appeared an angel unto him from Heaven, strengthening him." If you say sincere concerning your most cherished desire: "Not my will, but thine be done," you are sure to receive, if not the thing you ask, that which is better—the ineffably precious ministrations of the Holy Spirit, clearly showing you that God's will is better for you than your wish, and giving you strength to cheerfully do or suffer that will.

"That prayer which does not succeed in moderating our wish, in changing the passionate desire into still submission, the anxious, tumultuous expectation into silent surrender, is no true prayer, and proves that we have not the spirit of true prayer."—*The Methodist*.

A PLANTER who tried to prevent his little slave-boy from going to a prayer-meeting, ordered him to be well flogged, and while he was witnessing the cruel whipping he said to him, "What can Jesus do for you now?" To which the noble boy replied, "Him help me to forgive you, massa!"

Do not conclude the Lord is not with you, because things go very contrary, and he does not appear for you. He was in the ship, notwithstanding the storm, and the fear of the disciples of perishing.



(Continued from Page 39.)

9. The glory of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Num. 14: 21. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. 11: 9. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Hab. 2: 14. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5: 5. This glorious state, however, is not brought about by the conversion of all men. It is introduced by the destruction of sinful men, the restitution of the earth to its condition when it came from the hand of the Creator, and the gift of immortality to the meek of all ages. "For evil-doers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps. 37: 9-11.

10. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." See Isa. 65: 17-25; also chap. 11: 6-9.

This prophecy is said to be a figurative description of the condition of things during the temporal millennium. We, however, regard it as a prophetic description of the state of things after the restitution of the earth and man to their primeval glory. Before the fall, man was upright, and the earth and all the living creatures that God had created upon it, as viewed by the Creator, were seen to be "very good." Gen. 1: 31. The Scriptures do not teach the annihilation of all things by the fires of the great day, and the creation of all new things for the future state. But they do distinctly teach the restitution of all things. Thus saith the great Restorer: "Behold, I make all things new." Rev. 21: 5. Isaiah and the Revelator both speak of the new heavens and the new earth. The prophet Isaiah is either giving a figurative description of a very happy condition of things in this mortal state, or he is portraying the literal glories of the restitution after the second advent and the resurrection of the just. To the figurative view we find serious objections:—

(a) In order that all parts of their figurative theory may harmonize, our temporal millennium friends must have in their figurative new heavens and earth figurative houses, figurative vineyards, and they must eat the figurative fruit thereof, and behold around them figurative wolves and figurative lions, feeding with figurative lambs and figurative bullocks, to say nothing of the presence of figurative serpents. If it be said that the gospel is to convert all these wolves and lions and serpents, we reply, that if they are converted, they are no longer wolves and lions and serpents, and during the entire period of the millennium there will be none but figurative lambs and doves.

(b) The apostle has so clearly identified the three worlds, namely, the one before the flood, the one that now is, and the new earth which is to come, as to entirely preclude the figurative view. He says: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire

against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Pet. 3: 5-7, 13.

No fact can be more plainly stated than that the world that perished by the flood is the same as that which now is, and is reserved unto fire. This is to be changed by fire, and then will appear the new heavens and the new earth, according to the promise of God. And it is a remarkable fact that the promise referred to by the apostle is found only in Isa. 65. Thus the apostle links the three worlds together. Are the first two worlds literal? So is the third. Is the new earth, mentioned by Isaiah, figurative? So are all three worlds figurative. But if they are all literal, then we see a harmony in Scripture respecting them. If they be regarded as figurative, then we are left to the following conclusion:—

That in the days of figurative Noah, the figurative heavens and earth, being overflowed by figurative water, perished figuratively. But the figurative heavens and earth, which are now, are reserved unto figurative fire, against the figurative day of judgment and perdition of ungodly figurative men. Nevertheless, we, according to his figurative promise, look for figurative new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth figurative righteousness.

True, the sacred writers use figures and parables. But we should believe that God in his word means just what he says, unless the connection shows good reason why a figure or parable is introduced. With this view of the Sacred Scriptures, we see spread out before us the living realities of the new earth, in all their grandeur and glory, as when Adam was lord of Eden. Before the transgression, all was purity and peace, even among the beasts which God had created. And who can say that these, with natures such as the Creator first gave them, will not be in place in the earth restored from the fall, as well as in the earth before the fall!

Having examined the principal texts quoted to prove the conversion of the world, and having shown that they do not mean what they are said to mean, we will now call attention to some of the many direct proofs that no such state of things can exist prior to the second advent.

1. The prevalence of the little horn, which is a symbol of Roman Catholicism. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. 7: 21, 22. "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even forever and ever." Verse 18. Here it will be seen that the little horn makes war with the saints until they take the kingdom; and when they once obtain the kingdom, they hold it forever, even for ever and ever. Where, then, is there room for that period of peace and triumph of the church called the temporal millennium?

2. The apostacy. In 2 Thess. 2: 1-7, Paul states what would take place before the second coming of Christ. Is it the triumph of the world's conversion? No; it is the sad apostacy, the falling away, and the manifestation of the papacy, the man of sin, who will continue to the end. The apostle speaks of the manifestation and destruction of this blasphemous power in these words: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Verse 8.

3. The wicked continue with the righteous, as illustrated by the parable of the wheat and tares, until the end of the Christian age. See Matt. 13: 24-30. The friends of the doctrine of the world's conversion find this parable directly in their way, and they have wearied themselves in laboring to explain it away. But, as our divine Lord, by special request, gave an explanation of it, modesty suggests that we accept his explanation. See verses 36, 43. We simply repeat: "The field is the world." "The good seed are the children of the kingdom." "The tares are the children of the wicked one." "Let both grow together until the harvest." "The harvest is the end of the world."

4. Persecution and tribulation were to be the portion of the church of God in all ages. The apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of the faithful who had lived and suffered before, "of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered

in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 38-40. He also points to the future, and says: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. 3: 12.

5. The last days of human probation have been regarded as the favored period for the completion of the great work of converting the world. But the prophets of the Old Testament nowhere represent God as saying that the last days would be glorious. Jesus and the apostles of the New Testament never speak of the last days as a period of triumph to the church; but rather as the days of her peril, which demand especial watchfulness; the days of her mourning, and tears, and importunate prayers for deliverance. Paul describes the last days thus: "This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such turn away." 2 Tim. 3: 1-5.

6. Peter says: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?" 2 Pet. 3: 3, 4. How could these scoffers arise and deny his coming, and persecutions and perils exist in the last days, if all were converted long before his coming?

7. The last days embrace the very last day, reaching down to the coming of the Son of man. The days just before the second advent were to be like the days of Noah and of Lot. "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17: 26-30.

8. Destruction, not conversion, awaits the world at the very time when many popular professors cherish the delusive hope of the good time coming. They see no danger, and brand as fanatical alarmists those who obey the prophetic injunction, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2: 1. But says the apostle, "When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them," 1 Thess. 5: 3.

9. The way to destruction is broad, and many go in it; and the way to life is narrow, and but few find it. When one asked Jesus, "Are there few that be saved?" he answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13: 23, 24. Again it is recorded, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7: 13, 14. The doctrine of the world's conversion, and that of universal salvation, are both directly opposed to this passage. The one has the way to life narrow at first, but growing wider, until all walk in it; while the other has the way to life always wide enough for the whole world. But our Lord stated a great fact in this passage, which existed when spoken, ever had existed, and which would exist until the close of probation; namely, that the way to destruction was broad, and many would go in it; and that the way to life was narrow, and few would find it.

But when the few of each successive generation, from righteous Abel to the close of probation, who have bent their lonely footsteps in the narrow path to Mount Zion, shall reach their everlasting rest, they will constitute that "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," arrayed in



Heaven's purity and brightness. Not one of these had come out of that imaginary period of a converted world. No; not one. What an imposing scene! "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. 7:9, 13, 14.

### HOPE AND DUTY OF THE CHURCH.

BY MATTHEW HENRY.

Matthew Henry was born in Flintshire, England, in 1663. He was a pious dissenter, and deservedly eminent as a commentator of the Scriptures. Wm. Romaine declaring, "There is no comment upon the Bible, either ancient or modern, in all respects equal to Mr. Henry's." We give extracts:—

On Luke 12:45, 46: "Our looking at Christ's second coming as a thing at a distance, is a cause of all those irregularities which render the thought of it terrible to us."

On watching: "To watch implies not only to believe that our Lord will come, but to desire that he would come, to be often thinking of his coming, and always looking for it as sure and near, and the time of it uncertain. To watch for Christ's coming is to maintain that gracious temper and disposition of mind which we would be willing that our Lord, when he comes, should find us in. To watch is to be aware of the first notices of his approach, that we may immediately attend his motions and address ourselves to the duty of meeting him."

On 2 Pet., chapter 3, of the final fire he says: "It is yet to come, and will surely come, though we know not when nor upon what particular age or generation of men; and therefore we are not, we cannot be, sure that it may not happen in our own times."

On John 18:19: "It is meet that disciples should be warned of the haste and end of time, and apprised as much as may be of the prophetic periods of time."

On Rom. 8, Henry makes "the creature" to mean "the whole frame of nature, especially that of this lower world; the whole creation, the companies of inanimate and sensible creatures;" the vanity and bondage and corruption is the curse to which the whole creation is subject, now "hastening to a total dissolution by fire." He says: "The creature that is now thus burdened shall, at the time of the restitution of all things, be delivered from this bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God. They shall no more be subject to vanity and corruption, and the other fruits of the curse; but, on the contrary, this lower world shall be renewed, when there shall be new heavens and a new earth; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1; and there shall be a glory conferred upon all the creatures which shall be (in the proportion of their natures), as suitable and as great an advancement as the glory of the children of God shall be to them. The fire at the last day shall be a refining, not a destroying, annihilating fire." Compare with this Ps. 96:10-13; 98:7-9; "Let the heavens rejoice," &c.

On verse 19: "At the second coming of Christ there will be a manifestation of the children of God. Now, the saints are God's hidden ones, the wheat seems lost in a heap of chaff; but then they shall be manifested. . . . And this redemption of the creature is reserved till then; for as it was with man and for man that they fell under the curse, so with man and for man shall they be delivered. All the curse and filth that now adheres to the creature shall be done away then, when those that have suffered with Christ upon earth shall reign with him upon earth. This the whole creation looks and longs for.

Verse 23: "We groan within or among ourselves. It is the unanimous vote, the joint desire of the whole church; all agree in this. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. The groaning denotes a very earnest and importunate desire, the soul pained with the delay, . . . groans, not as the pangs of our dying, but as the throes of a woman in travail, groans that are symptoms of life, not of death."

2 Pet. 3: "That time which men think to be the most improper and unlikely, and therefore are most secure, will be the time of the Lord's coming. Let us then beware how we in our thoughts and imaginings put that day far away from us; let us rather suppose it to be so much

nearer in reality by how much further off it is in the opinion of the ungodly world."

"The first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ was what the people of God earnestly waited and looked for; that coming was for the consolation of Israel. How much more should they wait with expectation and earnestness for his second coming, which will be the day of their complete redemption, and of his most glorious manifestation."

"They (the wicked) will still attack us till the end of time; till our Lord is come, they will not themselves believe that he will come; nay, they will laugh at the very mention of his second coming, and do what in them lies to put all out of countenance who seriously believe and wait for it."

On Luke 18:8: "Now when he comes will he find faith in the earth? The question implies a strong negative; no, he shall not, he himself foresees it. . . . In general, he will find but few good people, few that are really and truly good; many that have the form and fashion of godliness, but few that have faith. Even to the end of time there will be occasion for the same complaint; the world will grow no better, no, not when drawing toward its period. Bad it is, and bad it will be, and worst of all just before Christ's coming; the last times will be the most perilous. In particular, he will find few that have faith concerning his coming. It intimates that he will delay his coming so long that wicked people will begin to defy it, and to say, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' They will challenge him to come; Isa. 5:18, 19, and Amos 5:18, 19; and his delay will harden them in their wickedness. Even his own people will begin to despair of it, and to conclude that he will never come, because he has passed their reckoning."

On Matt. 25: "As Christians, we profess not only to believe and look for, but love and long for, the appearing of Christ, and to act in our whole conversation with regard to it. The second coming of Christ is the center in which all the lines of our religion meet, and to which the whole of the divine life hath a constant reference and tendency."

On Dan. 12:10: Henry, though looking for an extensive proclamation of the gospel, looked not for its universal reception, but says: "As long as the world stands, there will still be in it such a mixture as we now see there is of good and bad. We long to see all wheat and no tares in God's field; all corn and no chaff in God's floor; but it will not be till the time of ingathering, till the winnowing day comes. Both must grow together until the harvest. There is no remedy but that wicked people will do wickedly; and such people there are and will be in the world till the end of time."

On Rev. 22:20: "This is Christ's farewell to his church, and the church's hearty echo to Christ's promise. Come, Lord Jesus! Thus beats the pulse of the church, thus breathes that gracious spirit which actuates and informs the mystical body of Christ, and we should never be satisfied till we find such a spirit breathing in us, and causing us to look for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. What comes from Heaven in a promise should be sent back to Heaven in a prayer. Come, Lord Jesus, and put an end to this state of sin, and sorrow, and temptation, and gather the people out of this present evil world!" So writes the pious Henry in a commentary, the superior excellences of which, says Dr. A. Alexander, are admitted by "thousands of judicious theologians," and of which Dr. Adam Clarke affirms, "It is always orthodox!" Henry died in 1714.—*Ancient Landmarks.*

### EXPERIENCE PROVES THE BIBLE TRUE.

Puerile would it have been for the world to have risen in consternation when Barnum succeeded, with his movable wax figures in such perfect imitation of the human race, and cried for fear of the extinction of the race. They looked like men, moved like men, opened their eyes and mouths like men, and yet were only wax. Skepticism looks sometimes like truth, moves like truth, shines and speaks like truth, and yet is simply an ingenious lie. The true soldier of Jesus should fear skepticism, as a man one of these wax figures. Is it not time for Christians to rise above the atmosphere of doubt, and walk in the light of God? We never doubt whether there is a sun when it shines on us and makes us warm. We can never

doubt the existence of bread when we are eating it. He who feels the life of God, gets beyond the reach of philosophical questioning, which is the very atmosphere of the age. Brethren, you will not question whether prayer is a reality if every day you receive answers to your petitions; you will never doubt the atonement of Jesus Christ or his deity, if sin is your daily grief, and Jesus your abiding companion. You will look the scoffers of the age in the face, and say to them, "Our eyes have seen, and our ears have heard, and our hands have handled the word of life."

Let ministers lead their flocks to these heights, and glorious results will follow.—*Central Baptist.*

### A REMARKABLE JOURNAL.

THE official organ of the Chinese government, known as the *Pekin Gazette*, is certainly a most remarkable journal. Not only is it the oldest newspaper in existence, but it is highly probable that it was the first journal ever published, and what is more, the first that was ever printed; for it is pretty well settled that the spread of news by means of written documents was attempted in Europe at certain periods long before the days of the printing press. The contributors to the *Gazette* are now, and have been for many centuries, the ablest men in the country noted for the attention paid to education. On this account the files of the paper must at some future time prove of immense service to the historian who desires to write an account not only of the Chinese Empire, but of the Asiatic nations with which in times past she has held diplomatic intercourse.

Although the paper is published under the immediate supervision of the government, this much must be said of it—that its columns have been open to those holding divergent opinions, and from this point of view it has carried out the modern idea of a review more thoroughly than the modern conception of a newspaper. An instance of this impartiality can be found in the recent publication by it of the letter written by Wu-ko-tu, one of the board of civil office, just before his suicide, reflecting severely on the usurpations actions of the Empress Regent. The intent of this document was to force them to abdicate, and the arguments against their further continuance in power were very strongly given. A civilized despot would have deemed it advisable to suppress this seditious communication; but the Chinese rulers have perhaps shown their good sense, as they certainly have their consciousness of strength, by giving it the publicity its authors desired.—*Printer's Circular.*

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## THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, JANUARY 29, 1880.

## SYNOPSIS OF THE PRESENT TRUTH.

NUMBER FOUR.



THE BELLY AND SIDES OF BRASS.

LEAVING for a while the empire of Persia, we turn our attention to that instrument by which this empire was subverted, and upon its ruins another, a third, kingdom erected, which bore rule over all the earth. God had declared by the mouth of the Prophet two hundred and seventy-two years before it happened, that a third kingdom should be erected upon the ruins of the second; and we, from our later stand-point have the privilege of tracing the historical steps by which it was accomplished.

Alexander the great was born at Pella in Macedonia, B. C. 356. This prince and Darius the Persian, were the two principal actors on the stage when the empire of the world for the second time exchanged hands. Of the history of the Greeks therefore, their gradual growth, their wars with the Persians, &c., previous to Alexander's time, we need not particularly speak further than this:—

"Philip, king of Macedon, the father of Alexander, having overthrown the Thebans and Athenians, in a great battle at Chaeronea, made himself thereby in a manner lord of all Greece; and therefore calling together at Corinth an assembly of all the Grecian cities and States, he there caused himself to be chosen captain-general of all Greece for the carrying on of a war against the Persians, and made every city to be taxed at a certain number of men, which each of them was to send and maintain in this expedition." But being slain by one of his guards the next year, just as he was ready to set forward, Alexander his son succeeded him in the kingdom, being then twenty years old. He soon called a general council of all Greece to meet again at Corinth, and there prevailed with them to be chosen also the successor of his father in the same general command which they had conferred on him before his death, for a war against the Persians.

Having by the next spring gotten together his forces, which according to the highest account amounted to no more than thirty thousand foot, and five thousand horse, he commenced, with this small number, his daring career against the throne of Persia. His progress perhaps cannot be better shown than in the following brief synopsis of his course, given by Rollin:

"Alexander set out from Macedonia, which is part of Turkey in Europe, and crossed the Hellespont, or the Strait of the Dardanelles. He crossed Asia Minor, (Natolia,) where he fought two battles, the first at the pass of the river Granicus,

and the second near the city of Issus. After this second battle he entered Syria and Palestine; went into Egypt where he built Alexandria on one of the arms of the Nile; advanced as far as Libya, to the temple of Jupiter Ammon; whence he returned back; arrived at Tyre, and from thence marched towards the Euphrates. He crossed that river, then the Tigris, and gained the celebrated victory of Arbela, possessed himself of Babylon, the capital of Babylonia, and Ecbatana, the chief city of Media. From thence he passed into Hyrcania, to the sea which goes by that name, otherwise called the Caspian sea, and entered Parthia, Drangiana, and the country of Paropamisus. He afterwards went into Bactriana and Sogdiana; advanced as far as the river Iaxartes, called by Q. Curtius, the Tanais, the farther side of which is inhabited by the Scythians, whose country forms a part of great Tartary.

"Alexander, after having gone through various countries, crossed the river Indus, entered India which lies on this side the Ganges and forms part of the grand Mogul's empire, and advanced very near the river Ganges, which he also intended to pass, had not his army refused to follow him. He therefore contented himself with marching to view the ocean, and went down the river Indus to its mouth.

"From Macedonia to the Ganges, which river Alexander nearly approached, is computed at least eleven hundred leagues. Add to this the various turnings in Alexander's marches; first, from the extremity of Cilicia, where the battle of Issus was fought, to the temple of Jupiter Ammon in Libya; and his returning from thence to Tyre, a journey of three hundred leagues at least, and as much space at least for the windings of his route in different places; we shall find that Alexander, in less than eight years, marched his army upwards of seventeen hundred leagues, [or more than fifty-one hundred miles,] without including his return to Babylon."

Ptolemy the Egyptian astronomer begins the reign of Alexander over the East with the building of Alexandria, B. C. 332; but it was not till the battle of Arbela, the year following, that he became, according to Prideaux, "absolute lord of that empire to the utmost extent in which it was ever possessed by the Persian kings." On the eve of this engagement, Darius sent ten of his chief relations to sue for peace for which he had twice sought in vain before; and upon their presenting their conditions to Alexander, he replied, "Tell your sovereign . . . that the world will not permit two suns, nor two sovereigns! Let him therefore choose, either to surrender to-day, or to fight to-morrow." Such was the indomitable pride and haughtiness by which he was governed. Having assembled his general officers and requested them to represent to the soldiers that they were to fight on this occasion not for Phoenicia or Egypt only, but for all Asia, and that the whole empire hung upon the issue, he led them against the army of Darius and gave him an irreparable overthrow. Darius hereon fled towards Media, and was shortly after traitorously slain by his attendants.

Thus ended the reign of Darius, and with it the Persian empire, after it had continued from the taking of Babylon by Cyrus two hundred and seven years.

Alexander, after his conquests in the far East, mentioned above by Rollin, returned to Babylon. While he remained there, which was nearly the space of a year, he gave himself up to the pleasures, luxuries, and drunkenness of the place, till at length he drank himself into a fever of which in a few days after, he died, B. C. 323. After his death, he having left no heir, great confusion arose about the succession. The governments of the empire were at length divided among the chief commanders of the army, who took at first the name of governors, but finally that of kings. Soon after they were settled in their provinces, they warred among themselves, till, after some years, all were destroyed but four; Cassander, who had Macedonia and Greece in the west, Lysimachus who had Thrace and the parts of Asia on the Hellespont and Bosphorus, in the north, Ptolemy who had Egypt, Libya, Arabia, Palestine, and Caele-Syria, in the south, and Seleucus, who had Syria and all the rest of Alexander's dominions in the east.

2. Connection, Vol. I, p. 378.  
3. Rollin.

BEAUTIFUL are the admonitions of him whose life accords with his teachings.

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