

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

"THRUST IN THY SICKLE AND REAP, - - - FOR THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH IS RIPE." Rev. 14:15.

VOL. I.

BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN, OCTOBER 1, 1886.

No. 17

THE GOSPEL SICKLE
IS PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
By the Review and Herald Publishing Association,
Battle Creek, Michigan.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:
URIAH SMITH, GEO. I. BUTLER, W. H. LITTLEJOHN,
D. M. GARRIGHT, AND R. F. COTTRELL.
For Terms, - - - See Last Page.

MISSION SONGS.

HARK the voice of Jesus calling—
Who will go and work to-day?
Fields are white, the harvest waiting,
Who will bear the sheaves away?
Loud and long the Master calleth,
Rich reward he offers free;
Who will answer, gladly saying,
"Here am I, O Lord, send me."

If you cannot cross the ocean,
And the heathen lands explore,
You can find the heathen nearer,
You can help them at your door.
If you cannot give your thousands,
You can give the widow's mite;
And the least you do for Jesus
Will be precious in his sight.

If you cannot speak like angels,
If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus,
You can say he died for all.
If you fail to rouse the wicked,
With the Judgment's dread alarms,
You may lead the little children
To the Saviour's waiting arms.

While the souls of men are dying,
And the Master calls for you,
Let none hear you idly saying,
There is nothing I can do.
Gladly take the task he gives you,
Let his work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calleth,
"Here am I, O Lord, send me."—Sel.

Notes & Comments.

NOTICE.—Parties receiving this Paper, not having subscribed for it, may know that it is sent to them by the courtesy of some friend. Do not hesitate to take it from the Office, for none will be called upon to pay for any numbers they have not ordered. We invite candid attention to the Contents of the Paper, and when you have read it, please hand it to a Friend or Neighbor.

NATURAL religion stands on the basis of Revelation, and includes in its scope the facts and laws which form the domain of science. On the other hand, science has never revealed a system of mercy commensurate with the moral wants of man. In nature, in God's creation, we discover only laws,—laws of undeviating strictness, and sore penalties attached to their violation. There is associated with natural laws no system of mercy. That dispensation is not revealed in nature, and is contained in the Scriptures alone.

THE promises of God are reliable. Some eighteen hundred years ago he promised through his servant John the final warnings of the gospel, which are recorded in Rev. 14:6-12. At the present time, precisely such warnings are being proclaimed in many countries all over the world. This work is true or false—it is the genuine fulfillment of the promised messages, or it is a base counterfeit. Now if the time is come for the promised warnings to be given, then they are doing their solemn and important work; for God's promises cannot fail of being fulfilled on time. On the other hand, the fact that these warnings are being preached is proof that the time is come, and the close of the work of the gospel is at hand.

How beautiful the thought that the sinner, by applying to Christ, may be forgiven of his past sins, brought from under the condemnation of the law into divine favor. When this is accomplished he is no longer under the law but under grace. Future and continued obedience will permit him to enjoy this grace continually. Future transgression will bring him again under the law, and there is no escape from its penalty, the second death, only by applying again to the Fountain and having the guilty stains washed away.

ONE of the most palpable and mischievous fables that Satanic cunning ever invented to delude mankind is the doctrine that men do not in reality die, when they seem to, but are at that moment translated into a higher, a nobler, and more exalted life; thus reiterating the serpent's bold contradiction of the word of God, namely, "Ye shall not surely die;" but instead "be as gods." No deception ever practiced upon men exceeds this unless it be that which claims a change of the Sabbath, which supposes it to be possible that the Lord's Sabbath day, *rest day*, could be changed from the day of the week on which he rested to a day on which he did not rest, but began his work. Men seeing the falsity of this delusion, rather than return to the truth, which is so unpopular and inconvenient, have been led to the boldest blasphemy imaginable, that of teaching that the only moral code God ever gave to man has been abolished by the Son of God.

THE book of Daniel was sealed up "till the time of the end." If we have reached that time, the prophecy is unsealed, and can be, and is, understood; and if it is now understood, this is proof that the time of the end is come; for it was sealed up till that time should come. If we are in the period foretold as "the time of the end," and are wise, we can understand the things which were sealed up till that time. Of that time it is said, "The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." The wise and the wicked are put in contrast. The reason why some do not understand is because they are wicked and not wise. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding; have all they that do his commandments."

THE doctrine of man's natural, inherent immortality is subversive of the doctrine of Christ's personal coming. If the Scriptures teach anything plainly and positively, they teach that Jesus Christ is coming literally and personally the second time, to raise the dead, destroy the wicked, and crown the saints. But the doctrine of immortal-soulism renders the second advent of Christ entirely unnecessary. If men are rewarded and punished at death, there is no need of Christ's second coming. If the saints are to live forever in heaven, there is no necessity for Christ to fit up a "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." The reason why there is no more stress laid on the personal coming of Christ, is the fact that popular theology is constructed on such a basis, that the second appearing of the Son of God can be entirely dispensed with. Is it not time to pause, and see whether popular theology and Scripture have not parted company with respect to this important question?

ISAIAH foretold that the time would come when all the prophecies would be set aside by public teachers, and this prophecy has now come to pass, as you seldom hear the prophecies explained in the modern pulpit. Isaiah, pointing to the last days, said: "The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men

deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this; I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed; and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned." Isa. 29:11, 12. Thus neither learned nor unlearned will undertake to explain the prophecies. The Lord then proceeds to pronounce a curse upon them for this neglect. Friends, we will have to read for ourselves.

HERE are three solid, clear texts in regard to the new earth. First, the Lord promises: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." Isa. 65:17. To this promise, God's people fasten their faith; hence, Peter says, (second text): "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth." 2 Pet. 3:13. That was the hope of the apostle. Third text, John, looking ahead to the end of the world; says; "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Rev. 21:1. How clear, and positive, and glorious, are the fundamental doctrines of the word of God. On these we rest our faith and build our hopes.

A RETURNED missionary from Palestine says that "not any of the natives, whether Jews or Arabs, name the days of the week Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc.; nor do they call the first day of the week Lord's day, nor do they ever give to the seventh day the name of Saturday. Never do they count the day from midnight to midnight, but always from sundown to sundown. The seventh day is known throughout Arabdom by *yom es-Sabt*—or day of the *Sabbath*. Neither the word *seven* nor any other name is given by the Arabs to the Sabbath day. It is always *the Sabbath*; and the reason for it, they say, is, that this has been its name from the beginning.

WILL there be an end? or will things always go on as they are? The fact is, that most people, even professors of religion, act as though the world was to stand forever. Their conversation, and their plans, and everything, show this. But the word of God has solemnly declared that there should be an end to the world, and that it will come like a flash of lightning, when men are the least expecting it. Jesus said: "So shall it be in the end of this world." Matt. 13:40. "End of this world." Who believes it? who is watching for it? who is looking for it? who cares about it? Take care, friends, God has spoken.

PAUL taught that there was no hope of a future life except through the resurrection of the dead. Here are his words: "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." 1 Cor. 15:32. What did Paul mean by this?—Just what he said; that if the dead did not rise, they had better eat and drink, for to-morrow they would die, and there was no future life. All hinges, then, not on a man's natural immortality, but on God's power and promise to raise him from the dead.

IN his comments on Rom. 7:13, Dr. Adam Clarke well says: "Let it be observed that the law did not answer this end [the rule of life] merely among the Jews, and in the days of the apostles; it is just as necessary to the Gentiles, to the present hour. Nor do we find that true repentance takes place where the moral law is not preached and enforced. Those who preach only the gospel to sinners, at best only heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly."

DOCTRINAL.

"Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Titus 2:1.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT DAY.—4.

BY U. SMITH.

As we now turn to this branch of the subject, namely, the nature of the work involved in the cleansing of the Sanctuary, or the investigative Judgment, another class of declarations which we find in the Scriptures at once suggests itself.

In Acts 3:19, 20, we read: "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you." The original admits of a little different translation. Thus, Mr. Wesley, in his notes on the New Testament, reads the passage: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, *that* the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and he may send to you Christ Jesus, who was before appointed."

Speaking of these two translations, Albert Barnes, in his notes on the Acts, says: "The grammatical construction will admit of either."

So far as the point now under notice is concerned, it matters not which one of these is adopted. One represents the blotting out of sin to be *when* the times of refreshing arrive; the other makes the blotting out of sin to be the *cause* of the coming of that refreshing. But neither of them gives the idea that this blotting out of sin takes place when the sinner turns to God. Both of them locate it in the future; and both of them represent it as just *preceding* the second coming of Christ. And this is especially true of the latter translation which follows the original in using a conditional verb respecting Christ's advent; not as though that were at all a doubtful event, but rather as if his coming to the personal salvation of the ones addressed, depended upon their having part in the promised refreshing, and as if that refreshing was to come in consequence of the blotting out of sins.

The relation of this work of blotting out of sins to the second coming of Christ, determines when it must take place. It just precedes that coming; but the last work Christ does before his coming, is to make the atonement in the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary. This, therefore, must be the time when, and the place where, this work is done. But if sins are to be blotted out, they must somewhere be written; and before they can be blotted out, the books which contain these records must be examined. On this point the Scriptures are very explicit. Thus the Lord says by Jeremiah: "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me." Jer. 2:22. By Moses the Lord speaks as follows: "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?" Deut. 32:34. In precisely the same manner speaks the apostle Paul: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. 2:5, 6.

Such expressions as these—"iniquity marked," "laid up in store," "wrath treasured up," etc.,—can mean nothing less than that God takes notice of men's sins, and that every one is accurately marked before him. All the texts which speak of the blotting out of sin must have reference to the same great fact. David accordingly prays that God would blot out his transgressions. Ps. 51:1, 9. Nehemiah prays respecting certain ones, that their sins may not be blotted out. Neh. 4:5. David and Jeremiah make use of similar language. Ps. 109:14; Jer. 18:23. In Isa. 44:22, 23, the prophet speaks prophetically of the blotting out of sin, connecting it with the new creation and final redemption, but using the past tense for the future, as is common in prophetic language. And in the previous chapter (43:25) he speaks of this blotting out of sins as being necessary in order that they may be no more remembered.

The existence of these books of record, and the use that is made of them in the great work of

Judgment, are matters of the most explicit revelation. In that awe-inspiring view of the Judgment given to the prophet Daniel, he says: "The Ancient of days did sit. . . . Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the Judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7:9, 10. John also saw the books in connection with the Judgment work. He says: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things *written in the books*, according to their works." Rev. 20:12. Thus it is evident that the sins of all men are entered upon the unerring heavenly records, and that the time is coming when the sins of all those who have repented and been converted, will be blotted out.

But there are other books besides the one from the records of which judgment is meted out to the wicked, as in Rev. 20:12. In Mal. 3:16, we read: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a *book of remembrance* was written before him for *them that feared the Lord*, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Nehemiah offered this prayer to God: "Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my *good deeds* that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof."

The book here referred to seems to be written for the righteous only, and hence to be designed to record their endeavors in the cause of Christ. No names would be recorded therein except the names of those who enter the service of God. But the Scriptures assure us that not all who enter upon this service will persevere and prove overcomers at last. This book will therefore show just how far they advanced in the work of overcoming, and how and when they failed. The object of this book being to contain only the good deeds of the righteous, such as they have endeavored to perform in the name and for the sake of Christ, it must show all their acts of obedience, sacrifice, self-denial, repentance, confession, and other efforts in the Christian life. When their life record is finished, if they have kept the faith and overcome, then this book will show, when the time comes for the examination of the books in the Judgment, that they are prepared for the ordeal, and are entitled to a favorable decision. From the records of this book their destiny must accordingly be determined, and this is the book that is to show them worthy of a part in the first resurrection, and in the world to come.

But there is still another book which is to be taken into account, called "the book of life." Rev. 20:12. It is spoken of also as "the Lamb's book of life." Rev. 13:8; 21:27. Its purpose is to contain the names of all those who have become followers of the Lamb. It is a record of those who will find deliverance in the great time of trouble. Dan. 12:1. "And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." It is the grand roll of honor of all those who are entitled to an entrance at last into the city of God. Rev. 21:27. But though a person may have entered God's service, and had his name registered in the book of life, unless he perseveres to the end, his name will be blotted out of that book. Rev. 3:5. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." From this declaration the opposite inevitably follows; namely, that those who do not overcome will have their names blotted out of the book of life. And the time when this is to be done is also indicated. It is when Christ confesses the names of his people before his Father, which must be in the investigative session with which the Judgment opens, and which results in "accounting worthy" as many as are entitled to eternal life.

This blotting out of the sins of the righteous is to them an event of the utmost importance; for if once blotted out, these sins can never be brought against them again in the Judgment, since men give account to God only for those things which are written in the books. No individual therefore

can have his sins blotted out until the close of his probation. And in order for the question to be determined whether they shall be blotted out or not, the books must be examined.

We now have before us the different books which are to be brought into requisition before the Judgment is completed. These are—

1. The books which contain the records of the sins of all men, in which the names of all men are entered, and from which the sins of the righteous will be blotted out, on their acquittal in the Judgment.

2. The books of remembrance written for the righteous only, in which their names only are entered, and which contains simply their good deeds, that is, their efforts to serve God and overcome sin. From these books all the records pertaining to those who do not succeed in overcoming will be blotted out; for "when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, . . . all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned." Eze. 16:24.

3. The book of life, containing the names only of those who have made a profession of Christ; from which the names of all those who finally fail to overcome are to be blotted out. Rev. 3:5.

All these books are requisite to the opening Judgment scene described in Daniel 7:9, 10; for they each contain records which are affected thereby. The first must be opened that the sins of the overcomers may be blotted therefrom; the second, that all the abortive efforts of backsliders and apostates may be blotted from its pages; the third, that the names of this latter class may also be blotted from its record, leaving the names only of those who have overcome, and who are to have immortality brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

It is evident that the result of the blotting out work is to draw the final line of separation between the righteous and the wicked and decide all cases. But this, as we have seen, is just what is accomplished by the cleansing of the Sanctuary,—the work of the atonement in the most holy place of the Tabernacle on high. Such, then, is the nature of the work of the investigative Judgment. It consists in the examination of the books, the blotting out of the sins of the overcomers, and the erasing from the book of life of the names of all who have failed to overcome.

As the object of the investigative Judgment is simply to decide who are Christ's that they may be his "at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:23), it is evident that the only cases which come up for examination in this division of the Judgment with a view to determining whether they are the Lord's or not, are those who have at some time made a profession of his name. For those who have never made a profession of the service of God have already decided for themselves the only question which it is the object of this investigative Judgment to determine, that is, to which class, righteous or wicked they belong; for by their course of life they have proclaimed themselves his enemies, and on that question there is nothing further to be decided in their cases. Nor would there be anything further to be decided in case of professing Christians, if it was a fact that all who enter the service of Christ were absolutely sure of overcoming. But all do not hold out to the end; hence the necessity of examining their cases to ascertain who have done this and who have failed.

It follows, therefore, that the important book—the decisive book—in this part of the Judgment, is the book of God's remembrance, containing not the names of the wicked world in general, but only of those who have professed to be followers of God. These cases alone come up in the investigative Judgment; for as we have seen, there is no occasion to introduce any others at this point. The records of this book determine whose sins shall be blotted out of the book where they are recorded, and their names retained in the book of life; and on the other hand whose sins shall remain uncanceled to be answered for in a future division of the Judgment, and their names be blotted from the book of life, and their good deeds from this book of God's remembrance.

The accomplishment of this work strikes the great balance sheet of the world. The records are then all complete. The blotting out of sins and names, from their respective books, is all finished. The names then remaining in the book of life show who are to be raised from the dead, and who

changed among the living, at the coming of Christ.

Let it be noticed that this branch of the Judgment work has but one specific purpose, and that is to decide the question of acceptance or rejection, life or death, for all mankind. It simply assigns all men to their respective classes, the good or the bad. It does not determine the amount of the reward due to the righteous, or the amount of punishment to be inflicted upon the wicked. Those matters still remain to be settled by the record of the deeds of the wicked, not yet examined at all, and by the records of the good works of the righteous, remaining in the book of remembrance, which have thus far been examined only on the question of character.

In this part of the Judgment God acts as Judge, and Christ as Advocate. Here Christ confesses to his Father the names of those who have confessed him before men; and their names are not blotted from the book of life; and here he also denies before his Father the names of those who deny him before men; and their names are blotted from the book of life. Matt. 10: 32, 33; Rev. 3: 5. Thus the Father accepts through Christ all who are his; and this being done, his part in the great work of Judgment ends. Thenceforward all judgment is committed unto the Son. John 5: 22.

CONSIDERATION OF REASONS ASSIGNED FOR SUNDAY-SACREDNESS.

BY G. I. BUTLER.

WE will briefly notice the leading reasons given for the supposed change of the Sabbath. We quote John 20: 19: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." It is supposed by many that these disciples were assembled to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus, and that when he came among them and said, "Peace be unto you," he thus indicated his approval of their act in assembling upon that day, and thus honored the first "Christian Sabbath." But does the language justify such an inference? From this and other scriptures we draw the following conclusions: 1. The reason why the disciples were together was "for fear of the Jews," and not to celebrate Christ's resurrection. 2. The place of their meeting was undoubtedly the upper room, where they all abode (Acts 1: 13), and not the temple or any other house of worship. 3. The time of this meeting must have been very late in the day, just before sunset. (By the Bible mode of reckoning time, the day closed at evening, or sundown. Gen. 1: 5; Lev. 23: 32; Mark 1: 32.) We are forced to this conclusion from the facts stated by the other evangelists, and because St. John declares it was evening. Luke gives an account of the journey of two disciples to Emmaus, seven and a half miles, that very afternoon, and of how Jesus made himself known to them after conversing with them and explaining the scripture predictions concerning himself, "as they sat at meat." Then "he vanished out of their sight." This was "toward evening," and "the day was far spent." Then they "returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." As they spoke of what had transpired, Jesus appeared. This must be the identical meeting spoken of by John, for he used the same expression, "Peace be unto you," and it was at the same time of day. He then asked them, "Have ye here any meat?" and ate in their presence. Mark records the same meeting. He gives a brief account of the two as they walked and went into the country, and of his appearing unto them; and states that the other disciples did not believe them. "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." Mark 16: 12-14. 4. We are forced to conclude that they could not have been celebrating or honoring Christ's resurrection, for they did not believe it had occurred. 5. We can see clearly how the disciples regarded this first day of the week, as two of them walked to Emmaus and back, a distance of fifteen miles, and Jesus made the same journey, and not a hint did he give that such a use of the day was wrong. A strange way to celebrate the day, if it was the first "Christian Sab-

bath." They simply regarded it as a secular day, and nothing more.

The little flock of disciples were in a retired place, fearing the Jews, who had just crucified their Lord. A few of their number ventured out to the sepulcher to embalm the Saviour's body, and were astonished to find that it was not there. A few others went into the country. What a contrast to the origin of the Sabbath of the Lord! The Creator "rested upon it" himself; then he "blessed" it, and set it apart to a sacred use, evidently by telling Adam how to keep it. His example and command were both given in its favor. But how different with this first day, on which Christ rose! If there is any divine authority for keeping Sunday, this day must have been the first of the new order of Sabbaths. But it was a busy day. Christ gave no example of resting upon it; he gave no command for his disciples to rest, nor did he hold any religious service on that day. Some of his disciples traveled fifteen miles on foot upon it, he keeping them company in thus laboring. Not a hint is given in all the Bible, that it should be used in any other manner than as a day for labor. Who can believe that God would in such a manner set aside the ancient Sabbath of his own appointment, and put in its place a new day, never giving a hint that the old one was abolished or the new inaugurated?

We next notice the claim that it was *customary* for Christ to meet with his disciples on the first day of the week, thus giving evidence of his regard for it, and proof of its sacredness. "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." John 20: 26.

This scripture, in connection with the one just noticed, is relied upon to prove that it was the practice of Jesus to meet with his disciples on the first day of the week, between his resurrection and his ascension. It will be noticed that the record does not say that it was on the first day of the week when Christ had this interview with Thomas and the disciples. The statement is that it was "after eight days" from the previous meeting. That previous meeting was at the *very close* of the first day, most of it probably occurring on the day following. It is claimed that the expression "after eight days" signifies just a week. But what evidence is there to prove this? "After seven days" is the expression employed by inspiration when defining a week. 1 Chron. 9: 25; 2 Kings 11: 5. The expression "After six days" (Matt. 17: 1) is defined by another writer to be "about an eight days after." Luke 9: 28. On what grounds, then, shall we conclude that "after eight days" means seven days or less? From the closing hour of Sunday, a period of time covered by the expression "after eight days," if the language be taken literally, would reach at least to the Monday night or Tuesday morning of the next week. How, then, can one rightfully claim that this meeting occurred on the first day of the week? It must be evident that this meeting was held because of the presence of Thomas, who was absent on the previous occasion, and not to honor any particular day of the week. Had the latter object been in view, the record would most certainly tell us what day of the week it was, and not use such an indefinite expression as "after eight days."

But even if we grant all our first-day friends claim, viz., that the meeting in question did occur on the first day of the week, what evidence is thereby furnished in behalf of Sunday-sacredness? Our Saviour ascended to heaven on Thursday, just forty days from his resurrection. Acts 1: 3. Another prominent meeting held with his disciples was on a fishing occasion. John 21: 3-25. This was the third occasion when Christ manifested himself to his disciples. Verse 14. Our friends will hardly claim that this visit occurred on Sunday.

There were five first-days between the crucifixion and the ascension. No mention whatever is made of any of these five first days, excepting the first one, on which he rose from the dead. If we admit that "after eight days" occurred on the second of those five first-days, which we are sure is not true, what would that prove? The evidence would then come far short of proving a custom, since the two following meetings—the fishing occasion and the ascension—were not on that day. A "custom" is a long-continued practice.

More than two instances are required to constitute a "custom." The "custom" of our Saviour was to honor the Sabbath of the Lord, and teach the people on that day. Luke 4: 16. It is utterly impossible to establish such a custom of his with reference to Sunday.

But we have already consumed sufficient space on this topic for this number, and will defer consideration of additional points until our next issue. Meanwhile we trust our readers will ponder carefully the foregoing claims and arguments.

"HEAR HIM."

BY F. D. STARR.

It has long been the cry of the Antinomian that in defending and obeying the law of God we do not render that honor and respect to Christ that the Father requires. He has commanded us concerning his beloved Son, "Hear him." This we should be anxious to do; and we find the Son saying, "Keep the commandments." For some reason, perhaps for the very reason that the Son taught obedience to the Father's law, Antinomians, or teachers of lawlessness, are now arguing from quite a different stand-point. To illustrate this innovation: A professed minister of the gospel once publicly stated that "neither the teachings of Moses and the prophets nor the teachings of Christ are binding unless re-affirmed or re-enacted by the apostles." The speaker further stated that Christ was born and lived, worked, died, arose, and ascended, under the old dispensation, and consequently his teachings were all connected with that dispensation, and therefore are not binding on us unless re-affirmed from the day of Pentecost. Thus, to the work of vindicating the law of God, we have now to add the sacred charge of defending the gospel of Christ; for some of those who have so long rejected the former now also set aside the latter. But this is only the legitimate result of casting away the law of the Lord. Says Christ: "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him;" and "He that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."

It certainly is no wonder that men reject the Son after having rejected the Father who sent him. It is probably not without significance that the remnant church is represented as having the testimony of Jesus and keeping the faith of Jesus as well as the commandments of God. It seems that both of these characteristics will be distinguishing features of God's peculiar people, as others wish to be considered as keeping only the faith of the apostles. Did the apostles themselves wish the people to understand that their teachings were of more authority than the teachings of Christ?—No, indeed; their mission in part was to urge the people to "remember the words of the Lord Jesus," which was in direct compliance with the command of Christ, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

I could but ask myself how the apostle Paul would have felt if he could have arisen from his grave, and entered into that congregation, and heard it asserted that the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ are not applicable to men to-day unless authorized by himself or Peter or some other co-laborer. Would he have been elated over this, or would he, as upon another and somewhat similar occasion, have rent his clothes in astonishment, saying, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God."

—Not how much you read, but how much you gain from your reading, is the true test of the practical value of your reading. Whether it be the Bible or the newspaper which you read, you can go over a great deal of ground and gain very little; or, again, you can cover but little ground and gain a great deal. When you turn away from your daily newspaper or from your daily Bible reading, it is a good plan to ask yourself, Well, now, what one truth, or fact, or thought, have I secured as a permanent addition to my mind treasures from that reading? You will perhaps be surprised to know how difficult it sometimes is to answer so simple a question as that one. But until you can answer that question, you have not read to advantage.—S. S. Times.



"The fields are white already to harvest."—John 4:35.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., OCTOBER 1, 1886.

CONVERSATION ON THE SABBATH QUESTION.

THIRD INTERVIEW.

INQUIRER.—I have been carefully reviewing the points considered in our previous conversations, and feel perfectly satisfied that the seventh day is the only Sabbath which can show a command for itself in all the Scriptures; that that command is definite and means the seventh day of the week; that the Sabbath was instituted at the creation before the fall, and cannot be a type; that it did not rest on the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; that God bestowed upon it paramount honor in taking it to be the sign between himself and his people; and that, in this sense, it is just as applicable to all believers in the true God in any age, as to ancient Israel. But now I want some light on another point. I have heard opponents of the Sabbath repeatedly and persistently and confidently assert that the Sabbath originated at Sinai, and I would like to know on what ground they put forth such a claim.

SABBATH-KEEPER.—That is a difficult question to answer; for there are no grounds there on which they can base any such claim. We can easily understand their object in taking, and trying to maintain, such a position. It is that they may show the Sabbath to be a Jewish institution, and hence confine it to the Mosaic dispensation; but there is not the first shadow of reason for such a view. Not the first act necessary to the institution of the Sabbath can be found in all the record between Egypt and the promised land. No divine being then rested upon a day to make it a rest-day. There was no calling of the attention of the people to such a day, as then first instituted, no blessing placed upon any such day; and no sanctification of such a day; and the law that was proclaimed by the Creator in such grandeur from Sinai, simply referred to a day upon which God had rested and which he had blessed and sanctified when he made the world. Moreover it is introduced with the word "remember"; but we cannot be called upon to remember a thing which we have not previously known.

I.—Your statements are certainly true so far as the record is concerned. But there is a passage somewhere in Nehemiah about God's making known the Sabbath to them at Sinai. How would you explain that?

S.—You refer to Nehemiah 9:13, 14. Let us read it: "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments; and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath." Now according to this testimony, when was the making known of the Sabbath accomplished?

I.—When God came down upon Sinai and spoke his law.

S.—And does this mean that the Sabbath had not been previously known by them, but was then for the first time brought to their knowledge and attention?

I.—Such, I suppose, is the idea they intend to convey; for they always quote this passage to prove that the Sabbath originated at Sinai.

S.—But this is not possible; for the sixteenth chapter of Exodus gives us a most explicit record showing how the Sabbath commandment was taken, at least one month before they come to Sinai, as the one by which to test the people to see whether they would walk in God's law or not. God gave them manna, which they were to gather every day except the seventh day, which was the Sabbath; on which day no manna should fall, and no one should go out to gather it. The only provision made for the Sabbath was the direction God gave them to gather twice as much on the sixth day as they had gathered on the other days. Verse 5. When this had been done, the rulers came and told Moses; and he replied, "This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." This is spoken of a day yet future, and it is called the rest day of the Lord; but

no day can be the Sabbath or rest day of the Lord except some day upon which he has rested; but when had he rested upon the seventh day? There is not the first particle of evidence that he had done this in Egypt or in the wilderness of Sin; it was at the creation; and God is here testing them on his original Sabbath. Again Moses says (verse 29), "See for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath," not "doth now give or institute the Sabbath." In the same manner would people expostulate to-day with those who might be found toiling incessantly through all the seven days, "Lo, the Lord hath given us a Sabbath in which to rest." When did he give it? Six thousand years ago, at the creation of our world. Our opponents know as well as we, or ought to, that this transaction recorded in Ex. 16 was one month at least before Israel came to Sinai. What, then, is the use of their quoting a text which applies only to Sinai to prove that the people then first had a knowledge of the Sabbath, when we have so plain a record that they knew it, were tested upon it, and kept it, at least a month before?

I.—I cannot account for such a course only on the ground that those defending error are ready to resort to any subterfuge, evasion, or quibble to make a show of evidence for their side, presuming that their readers will never turn to the record to look up the matter for themselves. They have certainly most miserably failed to make out their case here. But this makes me all the more curious to know just what the expression "madest known" does mean in Neh. 9:14.

S.—It evidently refers simply to a more full proclamation of the Sabbath than they had previously had. The same word is used in Num. 12:6, where the Lord says, "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision." Can we conceive such a thing as that a person could be a prophet and yet not have a knowledge of God, and not be also faithfully engaged in his service? Impossible. Yet to such God says he will make himself known in a vision; that is, he will reveal himself anew to him. So also in Eze. 20:5, God says that he made himself known to Israel in Egypt. Yet the people had before a knowledge of him, for the midwives feared him. See Ex. 1:17. In these instances it is not difficult to determine the meaning of the words "make known" and "made known." Just so of the "madest known" of Neh. 9:14.

I.—This is certainly clear and consistent. There is no proof that the Sabbath originated at Sinai. I am willing to admit, in view of what has been said, that from the creation to the Christian era, from the first to the second Adam, the Sabbath was binding without change and without interruption. But when Christ came, was not a new order of things introduced? It is claimed that Christ finished redemption. Thus the recent writer to whom I have already referred says: "And did not Christ finish the work of redemption? All heaven owns that the work of redemption is done; the Redeemer has sat down, and God has crowned him with glory and honor. Reader, wilt thou dare lift up thy unbelieving head and say, 'No! that finished redemption is not enough; it alone can never give me peace with God; I must add my good works, my righteousness?' Again he says, 'Behold in God's raising him from the dead, God's own testimony that the work of redemption is finished—finished with glory! glory to God, glory to Christ.'"

S.—It has always been a marvel to me, how any one could for a moment suppose that redemption was finished at the cross, or at the resurrection of Christ. We might just as well say that every building is finished when only the foundation is laid. Just think a moment what redemption must include. Redemption will not be finished till the work of Christ as mediator is done, till all the righteous are saved, the wicked destroyed, the crown of eternal life given to his people, the earth renewed, the New Jerusalem brought down from heaven, and the kingdom of God established in all the earth. The little flock in the last days are to look up; for their "redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. Redemption includes "the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:23. The "redemption of the purchased possession," this earth, is still future. Eph. 1:14. We are "sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4:30. Twice it is said that we have redemption through Christ's blood (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14), never once through his resurrection. The redemption is in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24) and he hath obtained it for us (Heb. 9:12) in the same way that he has obtained eternal life for us (John 17:2), which is still with himself. 1 John 5:11. We have examined this matter carefully, and have been forced to the conclusion that the claim that redemp-

tion was finished by Christ while here on earth, is one of the most unfounded, unreasonable, unscriptural, short sighted, and shallow views that a person can entertain. It has not a particle of testimony nor fact nor reason for its support; and all the rhetorical flourishes built upon it are simply so much empty sound.

I.—Well, that seems to make a clear sweep of that point certainly. If you keep on, I shall begin to think opponents of the Sabbath lack common sense.

S.—In fact, we have thought that very thing ourselves. David says, "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments." But when men begin to oppose the commandments, it does seem as if they were at once smitten with the most unaccountable mental and moral blindness. But we would caution you not to judge too harshly. False education, prejudice, mental weakness in some cases, but above all that natural enmity that exists against the commandments of God, may account largely for their obliquity.

I.—But one point in the foregoing quotation you have not mentioned; namely, that about our own works, and our own righteousness.

S.—This is the most unaccountable of all the charges brought against Sabbath-keeping. Just as soon as a person commences to keep the Sabbath, these opponents with one accord assume that by so doing he rejects Christ, and depends for salvation upon his own works; and they urge this to a degree which is both insulting and abusive. Ask any Sabbath-keeper in the land his position on this point, and he can explain himself. Does he depend on his own works?—Not a particle. Why then does he keep the Sabbath?—Because it is one of God's commandments, not to obey which would be sin, and would destroy all grounds of acceptance and hope.

We ask the opponent, Do you not carefully abstain from idolatry and blasphemy, and lying and stealing and killing? He answers, Yes. Then, we continue, are you not trusting in works and depending on your own righteousness? Oh, no! to commit these would be sin; and unless we refrain from sin we cannot hope for salvation in Christ. Exactly so. And now we have only to add that the Sabbath also is one of those commandments the violation of which is sin.

Men may misrepresent us as much as they please. Do not be misled nor deceived by them: This makes no difference with the sweet satisfaction the humble, sincere child of God finds in trying to walk in the path of obedience. A sense of sin makes us feel the need of our Saviour. But sin is the transgression of the law. The law lies at the foundation of all genuine repentance and Christian experience. But having received pardon for our past sins, shall we go right on in transgression? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid, says Paul. This would make Christ the minister of sin, as so many do who prate about the old "beggarly elements" of the law and our own filthy works, and secure to ourselves the greater damnation.

But no. We receive from Christ with the forgiveness of our sins, a nature which leads us to delight in the law of God after the inward man. Rom. 7:22; Ps. 119:97. We do not make void the law by faith in Christ. Rom. 8:31. The Sabbath becomes to us "a delight, the holy of the Lord and honorable" (Isa. 58:13), a foretaste of that heavenly and eternal rest that remains for the people of God; we have that peace that comes from loving God's requirements (Ps. 119:165), from the exchange of the carnal mind, which is not subject to God's law, for the spiritual mind, which leads us to delight therein, and a sense of Jesus' pardoning love, which passeth understanding. We love the Saviour as our adorable Redeemer, and enjoy sweet "rest" in him from the condemnation of sin. Matt. 11:28; Rom. 8:1.

Many will deceive themselves, thinking they are Christ's children, whom he never will own, because they reject the Father. Christ himself says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will [or keepeth the commandments] of my father in heaven." Matt. 7:21. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19:17. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14.

The Father and the Son are one. The love of God, which John says is to keep his commandments (1 John 5:3), does not lead us away from Christ but to him. Faith must have its corresponding works of love and obedience, or it is but a lifeless form, and a vain hope.

I.—I am glad we have had this interview. I see many things in a new light. I see the false position every one must take who opposes the Sabbath, and the weakness of the arguments he has to bring. I understand my own duty better, and by the help of the Lord will try to do it.

THE SAINTS' INHERITANCE.—8.

THE TIME FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM.

OUR limited space will not allow us to say all that we desire on this topic. We shall call attention to a few scriptures, and for a fuller exposition refer our readers to such works as "Thoughts on Daniel," "Exposition of Matt. 24," and "Age to Come," any or all of which may be obtained from our depositories or offices of publication.

We will first call attention to the texts which speak of the bringing in of the new-earth state. St. Peter says, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. . . . Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:10, 13. This testimony shows that the time when the earth becomes an abode for righteousness, or, as some render the text, "wherein the righteous shall dwell," is after the fires of the day of the Lord have purged the works of the Devil out of it. This must locate this inheritance after the destruction of the wicked; for the prophet says: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Isa. 13:9. Then the establishment of the kingdom on earth must be after the second coming of Christ, and after the destruction of those "that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The kingdom of God follows those kingdoms represented by the four beasts of Daniel 7. We read, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." Dan. 7:17, 18. The powers represented by the symbols of the four beasts, are not complete until the little horn has accomplished its work. The kingdom is not given into the hands of the saints until the work of this little horn is completed; for by reading Dan. 2, where are introduced symbols of the same kingdoms, we learn that when the God of heaven sets up a kingdom, the image is dashed in pieces, and becomes as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, etc. But by comparing the work of the little horn with the description of St. Paul's man of sin, it will be clearly seen that they are identical, and, therefore, that the work marked out as the smiting of the image on the feet can be nothing else than the events by which the nations are dashed in pieces at the coming of Christ. With these points before us, it must be clearly seen that the kingdom cannot be established prior to Christ's second advent.

The above conclusion is confirmed by the further testimony of Daniel, "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. This shows that the time when the saints possess the kingdom is after judgment is given to the saints.

The testimony of the prophet Daniel is clear proof of our position that the earth is finally to become the kingdom of God: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." Dan. 7:27. A kingdom under the whole heaven could be nothing less than the whole earth. So his former statement—"But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom"—implies clearly that they will take as their kingdom the same territory as that over which the four beasts have borne rule.

By reading our Saviour's testimony as recorded by St. Matthew, we gain a further clue to the time of giving the kingdom to the saints, as well as its location: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:31-34.

What kingdom was prepared from the foundation

of the world?—According to this text it is the one the saints are to inhabit. Are the saints at that time called to inherit heaven as a kingdom? If you say, Yes, we would ask, was the heaven which you suppose the saints are to inhabit, where God dwells, prepared at the foundation of the world? We can conceive of no kingdom that was prepared from the foundation of the world, but the earth itself. When God had created the earth, and beautified the face of it, and pronounced it very good, he gave man dominion over it. Gen. 1:26. This first dominion is to come to Christ. Micah 4:8. So we conclude that the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world is the earth itself.

The above text is evidence as to the time when the dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens shall be given unto the people of the saints of the Most High. It is when the Son of man is seated on the throne of his glory, and all nations are gathered before him, and he makes a final separation, consigning one party to the flames and receiving the other to possess the kingdom. It has been argued, quite conclusively too, that the wicked cannot be thus consigned to the flames till after their resurrection, which Revelation 20 locates at the end of the thousand years after Christ's second advent, as it also does their destruction. And, therefore, the time when the saints are called to possess this earth as a kingdom must be a thousand years after Christ's second advent, as it could not otherwise be after the resurrection of the wicked.

Certain it is, according to St. Peter's argument, that it is after the earth is made new that the saints are to receive it for an inheritance. "We look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13. The earth is to become an abode for the righteous after it is purified by fire; and yet, after that purification, it will be the earth that is now, in the same sense that this earth is the one that existed before the flood. This earth is made of the same material that existed before the flood, and yet it is said that "the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." And so of this earth: when it has been melted and undergone a change by the action of fire, it will become a new earth, in which the saints will dwell.

If this earth is not to become the abode of the saints until it is made new, we see it will have quite a bearing in the settlement of the question when the kingdom is established on earth, to learn, if possible, when the earth is made new. St. Peter says, The day of the Lord will come, in the which this earth is to be melted (2 Peter 3:10), and a new earth is to be brought in. This text does not fix the definite point when this change shall take place, further than it is said to be in that day. The day of the Lord, we understand, commences with events just prior to Christ's second coming, and concludes after the wicked are destroyed forever out of the earth, which we see by Rev. 20 is in the "little season" after the thousand years. So this text would not fix the definite point for the event, save that it shows that it will be in the day of the Lord.

We will now inquire at what point in the day of the Lord is the new-earth state brought in. Some have argued that it will be at the very commencement of that day; that at Christ's second coming the saints will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and that they will then enter the New Jerusalem while the wicked are being destroyed and the earth melted. Some have claimed that there the prophet's testimony applies: "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Isa. 26:20. Although we agree with the position that this text is a call for God's people to hide themselves while this earth is undergoing its purging by fire, yet, from the testimony that immediately follows, we conclude it cannot apply till after the thousand years. "For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Here is a coming of the Lord out of his place, and the special object of that coming is stated. When he thus comes to punish the wicked, the earth no more covers her slain. So it must be that at that point all the wicked are resurrected, which is conclusive evidence that this text has a better application at the end of the thousand years.

There is a serious difficulty in the view that the new earth is brought in at the beginning of the thousand years. It seems from St. Peter's testimony that when

this purifying of the earth takes place, the works in it are destroyed. But is it consistent to suppose that after this earth has been cleansed one thousand years, and during that time been the place "wherein dwelleth righteousness," that all the wicked rebels that ever were upon it, shall be resurrected in one vast body out of the purified earth, and go up on its beautiful plains with Satan at their head, and that then fire and brimstone shall be rained from heaven upon those glorious fields of verdure to destroy the wicked?

By the above remarks we do not dispute that the wicked will be raised at the end of the thousand years; that they will come around the New Jerusalem and be destroyed. But we understand their destruction is connected with the purification of the earth. Then is the time when they shall "see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom" (Luke 13:28), and they themselves thrust out. The kingdom is first established in the city, and finally when the earth is purified, the "dominion and greatness of the kingdom" will be "under the whole heavens." If the earth is made new, and the wicked are upon it when they see the kingdom, they would virtually be in the kingdom, and how could they see themselves thrust out? Again, if the whole earth is made new and constitutes the kingdom when they behold it, where is their standpoint from which they can behold, and be themselves out of the kingdom? It is all plain with the view that the kingdom is first established in the city, and after the wicked are cut off and the earth cleansed, that the dominion is extended under the whole heaven.

It has been suggested by some that Christ's kingdom cannot be established at all, until he takes possession of the whole earth, and destroys the wicked, and establishes a peaceful reign upon it. But we do not suppose that this is necessarily so. When his kingdom is set up, the heathen are given into his hands, that he may "break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." This he will do at that time when the Lord has said of Christ, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. 2:7, 8. This asking for and receiving the kingdom is undoubtedly the event described by the prophet Daniel, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom," etc. Dan. 7:13, 14. Some suppose this to refer to Christ's second coming. This cannot be, for when he comes the second time, he comes away from the Father; but this testimony speaks of a time when he is "brought near before him," to receive a kingdom. We read, in the parable of the nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom, "When he was returned, having received the kingdom," etc. Luke 19:15. So he receives the kingdom before he returns. We think we shall be able to show that he reigns, with the saints, in heaven, in the New Jerusalem, the capital of his kingdom, for a thousand years. At the end of that period, as recorded by the prophet Zechariah, Christ's feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, and the Mount of Olives will cleave half toward one sea and half toward the other, and there will be formed a mighty plain. Upon that plain we understand that the city, New Jerusalem, comes down. The wicked are then resurrected (Rev. 20), Satan goes out to deceive them, they gather around the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. That fire which burns the wicked, burns up the works of the Devil in the earth. By that fire the mountains are melted and run down like wax, and thus the deep caverns of the earth are filled. The curse is forever swept from the earth, and when the fires of that day have subsided, the earth will stand forth in its restored state, beautiful and glorious, and will become the everlasting abode of the saints of God—the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, which St. Peter says we look for, according to God's promise.

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH.

—Take down your concordance, turn to the word "kingdom," run it through the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, and notice how all the promises of God and the hope of the saved cluster around that word kingdom. Christ was promised a kingdom; he came to obtain a kingdom; he died to purchase a kingdom; he has gone to get a kingdom; he is coming back to take his kingdom; the saints are heirs of the kingdom; daily we are to pray for the kingdom to come. This is not a myth, an idea, a theory, but a grand, solid reality; the kingdom that David had. Strange that modern religious teachers have wholly lost sight of this prominent doctrine of the Scriptures.

IMMORTALITY A GIFT.

WITHOUT entering into a discussion as to what that principle or element denominated the soul of man is, or attempting an analysis of a body so "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14), I propose to inquire briefly into a few particulars whether the Bible warrants the belief that there is in man a conscious principle or *entity*, which leaves the body at death for an eternal existence, either in happiness or misery. This question correctly decided, and that decision cordially received and incorporated into the creeds of the popular Christian denominations, would eliminate from their articles of faith one of the most prolific sources of evil extant within the pale of professedly Christian organizations.

If the Bible be taken as the standard of judgment on this question, we must conclude that there is no such entity as an *immortal soul* pertaining to any mere man. For in 1 Tim. 6:15, 16, we have this declaration: "The King of kings, and Lord of lords, *who only hath immortality.*" This Bible statement alone ought to be sufficient to forever settle the question in the *negative*; but when we find this cardinal negation of the soul's immortality corroborated by all other scriptures bearing on this point, and that such a view *only* harmonizes all parts of Scripture, and makes more clear the wonders of redemption, and the inexhaustible fullness there is in Christ Jesus, who is the Christian's life, we wonder that a fallacy so obvious should ever have gained so wide a currency among denominations of professedly Christian people, whose professed rule of faith and life is divine revelation.

It is somewhat significant that while the word *soul* is found eight hundred and seventy-three times in the original Scriptures, it is *never once* called immortal! And yet in sermons, prayers, exhortations, and so-called Christian instruction, "immortal soul," "never-dying soul," and equivalent expressions abound. The word *immortal* is found in 1 Tim. 1:17, but is applied to God, not to man. The celebrated Olshausen says: "The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the name, are alike unknown to the entire Bible."—*Com. on 1 Cor. 15:18.*

Seventh-day Adventists teach that immortality is a gift bestowed upon the righteous at the resurrection; and this view is in perfect accord with the Scriptures. In Romans 2:7 there is a class of persons spoken of, "who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for . . . immortality." This passage is comprehensive, and doubtless includes all true Christians, and conveys the idea of an utter destitution of the thing sought for, as well as an exhortation to *earnestly strive* for it. How those who believe that man is *naturally immortal* can reconcile that idea with an exhortation to *seek for immortality*, we cannot understand.

In all God's requirements of man, in relation to securing his salvation, there is a beautiful propriety, nothing unnecessary, nothing superfluous. But if man has *immortality* already, or *inherently*, why *seek for it*? The idea is absurd, from a logical point of view, and ought to be rejected because of its antagonism with a line of scriptures which are totally irreconcilable with man's *inherent immortality*, but which teach the sad truth that *man is mortal*, and that even if he is a subject of "the redemption which is in Christ Jesus," he will not receive the boon of immortality until Jesus comes "the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28. Compare also Rev. 22:12.

In Job 4:17 we have this expression: "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" If the theory that man is *inherently immortal* were true, Eliphaz (speaker in the above quotation) certainly would not have made use of the expression *mortal man*. Eliphaz evidently intended to draw a sharp contrast between God, who only hath *immortality*, and man, who *hath it not*, who is *perishable* and destined to pass into that state of unconsciousness referred to in Job 14:10, 21; also Eccl. 9:5, 6, and Ps. 6:5; 146:4.

These passages, with many others of like import, are so strong and emphatic in relation to the *mortal* and *perishable* nature of man, that we cannot wonder at Paul's inference, if there be no resurrection "then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15:18. This declaration would be strange and unwarranted if the "souls of believers pass *immediately* into glory" at death (as popular theology teaches). If the body is only a clog of clay, as Spiritualists and immaterialists would have us believe, why should Paul make such an ado about the body, when the jewel, the immortal (?) soul, escaped from its worthless prison (the body), is safe in heaven? It may afford a fine foundation for such so-

called sacred poetry as, "I want to be an angel;" or, "A never-dying soul to save," but such a theory has no support from the Bible, and seems to have been unknown to those who "spake [and wrote] as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21.

In contradiction of such fine-spun sentimentalism, the solemn truth which the Bible clearly and in various phraseology makes known, remains, "The dead know not anything; . . . neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Eccl. 9:5, 6. The Bible assumes that man is only a *probationer* for *immortality*; and if it becomes his in actual possession, it will be because of a certain *perfection of character*, and will be given as a gift from the Lord Jesus ("I give unto them eternal life," John 10:28), who is the life of every Christian; which transaction is thus expressed in the volume of inspiration: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:4. This we know, because Christ hath brought to light, or made manifest, life and immortality through the gospel. 2 Tim. 1:10.

Thus we find a line of scriptures bearing on the *when* and *how* man becomes invested with the attribute of immortality, which, with the perfection of every Christian grace, launches him on the broad ocean of an endless felicity, in that glorious home which the Saviour has gone before to prepare for them who through "faith and patience inherit the promises;" even the kingdom which the saints of the Most High are to take and possess forever and ever.

The time *when* and the manner of this grand consummation, is beautifully set forth in 1 Cor. 15:52-54: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

The complete triumph over the corrupt and perishable condition in which we pass our probation here will then have had a glorious consummation in "an abundant entrance" into the New Jerusalem, from which all evil is forever excluded, and whose grand register is the Lamb's Book of Life,—*Signs of the Times.*

A WORLD MADE FROM NOTHING.

Nor long ago a bright five-year-old boy asked, "Mamma, what is the earth made from?" The reply given was, "God made it out of nothing." I was astonished when I heard it, not that I had never heard it before, for many Christians, among whom may be found some of the ablest commentators, boldly assert it. And yet I could not help feeling that the Scriptures taught no such thing. Putting it in the form of the answer given, it would almost seem that the idea originated at a time when there was little unbelief, and when faith soared triumphantly above every opposing obstacle. To-day infidelity comes forward unchallenged, so we need no man-made tests of faith. Indeed the simple unequivocal statements and requirements of Scripture impose a test which is quite sufficient for this unbelieving age. Therefore we should be careful to not go beyond the plain teachings of Inspiration. Where they are clear and positive, we may be justified in so teaching them, and, generally, such statements will be accepted by those who have faith in the Creator. But when men teach dogmatically doctrines which are unscriptural, then begins the war of words which divides the church into parties and sects, at the same time giving infidels just cause, in many instances, to burlesque what they call "Bible teachings."

For our knowledge of the creation and all that appertains thereto, we are wholly dependent upon divine revelation, which at once becomes the basis upon which faith rests; for there is nothing in nature which would give us any clue to the solution of the question alluded to, which addresses itself to children, as well as those of more mature minds. Let us read a few texts. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1:1. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Ps. 88:6. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Heb. 11:3. How beauti-

fully the subject is presented in these brief inspired records, and yet nothing is said about the "eternity of matter," and no intimation is given that the universe of God was made from "nothing." And leaving the matter where Inspiration has left it,—unexplained, because we would be unable to comprehend it,—it would never provoke discussion among believers, or open the way for cavilers to ridicule the first verse of the Bible.

Expositors are apt to say just a little more than the inspired writers have said; and thus for centuries; by the teachings of the Fathers as well as by modern theologians, some of the grandest truths and most important doctrines have been so obscured or perverted that they are unworthy of the name of Biblical teachings. Are not these perversions of Scripture in a large degree responsible for much of the infidelity of the nineteenth century?

Because the apostle says "that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," some have illogically concluded that the earth was formed out of nothing. Let me inquire, Does not matter exist in a state of invisibility as well as in a condition in which it is apparent to our senses? Who dare say that there are not worlds of matter in the store-house of the great Architect of the universe?

The microscope opens to our vision an almost infinite variety of material forms, animate and inanimate, many of which are found in the food we eat and in the water we drink; and yet, unaided by this instrument, we are insensible of their presence. We may subdivide these particles by chemical agency and thus they become imperceptible even with the aid of the most powerful microscope; yet they exist, and by summoning to our aid the spectroscopy, matter once more becomes appreciable to finite man. Here, however, the limit for mortals is reached. Beyond this the infinitesimal particles are known as atoms, and are as yet incomprehensible to our limited powers.

Undaunted, we turn our eyes heavenward, and gaze with delight upon six thousand starry worlds. Does matter find its limit here?—No. By using telescopes of varying powers, millions of stars appear until it seems that the number, which might be multiplied to infinitude, must remain unknown to mortal, finite man, simply because of his inability to construct an instrument which will bring the throne of creation's King within the radius of his vision. Then, certainly, matter does exist in many forms, even though it does not appear always to man.

It is difficult to understand why men should try to make it appear that the word *create* means "to bring into being from nothing." Its use in the Scriptures should, I think, determine its meaning. The Hebrew word *bara* occurs forty-seven times in the Old Testament. Forty-two times it is translated "created" and "create," three times "creator," and two times "make" and "made." About twenty times it is used in relation to man in some way, and about twelve times to the earth. In its other uses it relates to Jerusalem, the new heavens and new earth, animals, etc.

The first chapter of Genesis presents good illustrations of the use of the word *bara*, or create. "God created the heavens and the earth." Verse 1. "And God created great whales," etc. Verse 21. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Verse 27. In Gen. 2:7 it is expressly declared that "God formed man of the dust of the ground." Now how could this statement be true if *bara*, or create, means "to bring into being from nothing." Observe, that not one of the forty-seven instances where the word is used, naturally or of necessity, requires us to give it the popular definition; but on the contrary, nearly one-half of the entire number actually restrict its meaning to *formation from pre-existent matter*. One more illustration will be sufficient. "For, behold, I create [*bara*] new heavens and a new earth." Isa 65:17. Compare this with 2 Pet. 3:7, 10-13. By this we learn that after this sin-cursed earth is melted with fervent heat, the glorious "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," will, at the fiat of Omnipotence, be created from the renaescent elements of the old.

Biblical theology is the kind which is most needed in these sentimental times; and we can rest assured that no commentary or lexicon is equal to the Bible itself for explaining the doctrines or terms which are used therein. And as the Scriptures do not inform us of what God made the earth, perhaps it would be better when we are asked of what it was formed to simply reply, We do not know.—*Present Truth.*

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

THE HARVEST CALL.

BY ANNIE TEAGUE.

Fourth with the day-spring flies
Far o'er the wide plain's sweep,
A swift-winged call, that cries,
"More laborers to reap!"

The yellow harvest stands;
I see what great reward
Awaits the willing hands
That gather for their Lord.

I cannot reap the sheaves,
My puny arm is vain;
But strength some gleaming leaves
That yields its golden grain.

And if I bring at length
No garner running o'er,
But burdened as my strength,
On me is laid no more.

What tho' the gift be small?
Laid on that altar fair
Where heavenly grace doth fall,
Grows measureless and rare.

And so I heed the call,
While yet the sunshine lies,
Before the shadows fall
"Twixt me and paradise.

INTEGRITY OF CHARACTER.

BY EUGENE LELIAND.

It is recorded of a sentinel who was standing guard at one of the gates of Pompeii when that city was destroyed by a volcanic eruption, that he remained at his post of duty, and perished in the melted lava that filled the streets and buried the houses. Centuries afterward, when the city was exhumed, the skeleton of a soldier with his armor was found at the city gate. Every one is familiar with the story of Casabianca, who, during a battle, had been assigned to a position on board a ship, and told to remain there till his father should return. But his father was killed in the action, and could give no heed to the question of his son, "My father, must I stay?" And though—

"The flames that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead,"—

he would not forsake his post, but perished in the flames.

It is such an integrity as is shown in these examples that is required by the Christian,—an integrity that will not swerve though, like Daniel of old, he be cast into the den of lions. How mighty an influence for the right could be exerted, would every one who professes the name of Christ manifest the same integrity of character as was shown by the three Hebrew children who were cast alive into the midst of the burning fiery furnace because they refused to bow before the great image which the king had set up.

Job was a man of such integrity that when God permitted his family and property to be taken from him, and his own body to be afflicted to such an extent that life itself was a burden, he was heard to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And again, "All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. . . . Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me." Though counseled by a foolish wife to "curse God and die," he preserved his integrity, and even desired that God should test the purpose of his heart. "If I have walked with vanity," he says, "or if my foot hath hastened to deceit; let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity."

David was a man who came near to the gates of death through his iniquity; but after he had sincerely repented of his sin, and his delight was "in the law of the Lord," he could say, "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me."

Integrity of character preserves men in the hour of temptation. He who has been faithful in every time of trial, finds it an easy task to shun the path of danger; but he who yields to every inclination, and does not control his evil desires, is led like the ox to the slaughter. How promptly did Joseph, when tempted by the wily Egyptian, say, "How

can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" There was no question about the matter for him. He refused to yield to temptation as a matter of course. Rather would he go down into the loathsome dungeon than violate his integrity of character.

Integrity of character also begets confidence. When one who has maintained his uprightness under all circumstances is brought into close places, he has confidence to ask for assistance. Witness the man who has served his employer faithfully for a long series of years. During a protracted illness his place is kept for him until his recovery, and the wants of his family are looked after. But, on the other hand, the man who cannot be relied upon has no confidence to hope for such favor in case of distress.

King Hezekiah, when told by the prophet that he must die, turned his face to the wall, and pleaded his integrity of character before God. His prayer was heard and answered before the messenger left the house. Well will it be if all of us who profess the name of Christ can exercise that confidence which will enable us to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." How can one who cherishes iniquity in his heart have confidence to ask anything of God? "If I regard iniquity in my heart," says David, "the Lord will not hear me." And to the same effect Solomon speaks: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

In order to obtain this confidence, it is necessary to abide in Christ; for the Saviour says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." And to the same effect the apostle John speaks: "And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." And again: "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

Integrity is strengthened by resolutions. After David had the witness that his sin had been forgiven, he was fearful that he might again fall, and he formed a resolution to walk in his integrity. Solomon says, "The integrity of the upright shall guide them." He who never yields to temptation, has formed a habit which will guide all his actions. And what an influence is exerted upon children by the possession of this Christian virtue by the parents! The child who sees his parent practice one thing while he professes another, soon loses confidence in the religion of that parent. Parents often mourn over the conduct of their children, and wonder why it is that they take no interest in religious things, when their own conduct is at the bottom of the difficulty. Solomon speaks on this point also: "The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him."

THE FIELD.

"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD."

PROGRESS OF THE CAUSE.

Brief mention of work done and results accomplished by Seventh-day Adventists, in different parts of the field, according to reports received since our last issue:—

AUSTRALIA.—Membership of church at Ballarat increased to forty-five.

CANADA.—Tent meetings being held at Brownsville; six believers baptized at St. Catherines.

DENMARK.—Report from J. G. Matteson gives interesting accounts of meetings at Copenhagen, where several worthy people have accepted of the truth as preached, and two colporters have commenced work in the city; good reports are received from Juliland, Asaa, and Sleswig.

IOWA.—Tent meetings held at Audubon by Elds. Hawkins and Willoughby, and a company of sixteen raised up ready for church organization; Sabbath-school of thirty members organized at that place; meetings begun at Atlantic with favorable prospects.

ILLINOIS.—Elds. A. O. Tait and F. D. Starr report that thirteen have signed the church covenant at Odin, as one result of a series of meetings held at that place by them; three converts receive baptism at Centralia.

INDIANA.—J. W. Covert and F. M. Roberts hold meetings at South Milford, and report that five heads

of families have embraced the faith; two believers baptized at Mud Lick, and a church of twelve members organized; new church building about completed at New Marion.

KANSAS.—Camp-meeting held at Osborne City, with good success; twenty-six persons baptized.

KENTUCKY.—Seven new converts at Dalton, where also a Sabbath-school has been organized; two new believers reported at Slaughterville, ten at Auburn, and fifteen at Marion, as results of meetings held at those places by I. H. Evans; Sabbath-school of thirty members organized at Marion.

MINNESOTA.—Several new believers reported at Pelican Rapids; church at Dodge Center receives four new members, and at Lake City five.

MICHIGAN.—Three believers baptized at Battle Creek; the number of believers at Edmore increased to sixteen; W. C. Wales reports several conversions at Saugatuck, as a result of meetings being held there; Sabbath-school of sixty members is organized and in a flourishing condition.

MASSACHUSETTS.—Tent-meetings and mission work at New Bedford result in a company of thirteen believers; the State camp-meeting held at this place was largely attended, and very successful, sixteen converts receiving baptism at that time; the sum of \$3,000 was pledged at the camp-meeting to be used in extending the work; tent meetings are being continued with favorable prospects.

MAINE.—State camp-meeting held at Deering's Oaks; a goodly number of converts result from the meetings, and six receive baptism.

MISSOURI.—N. W. Allee and J. W. Watt engage in holding meetings at Princeton, and report three heads of families as having embraced the faith.

PENNSYLVANIA.—Six persons accept the faith at Venango, as a result of labors by J. G. Saunders and J. L. Baker; series of meetings commenced by them at Blooming Valley.

VERMONT.—C. L. Kellogg and H. S. Farman hold a series of tent meetings at Middlebury, which results in a company of twenty-five staunch believers, and a flourishing Sabbath-school.

WISCONSIN.—Meetings held at Sextonville and Richland City result in several conversions.

WEST VIRGINIA.—C. H. Chaffee holds tent meetings at Paw Paw and Parkersburg, and reports several converts at each place.

THE THEOLOGICAL WORLD.

... General Booth, Commander-in-Chief of the Salvation Army, is coming to America.

... The colored Baptists of the Northwest have sent two missionaries to the Congo field.

... The Chicago *Interior* denies that infant baptism is falling into disuse in the Presbyterian Church.

... There are 7,000 Esquimaux converts in Greenland under the care of the Danish Missionary Society.

... France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal have together a population of 90,000,000, of whom only 680,000 are Protestants.

... In the years of 1884-5 there were thirty-two convents and monastic colleges built in Rome, notwithstanding the law to the contrary.

... The Catholic question has again broken out with renewed vigor in Germany. Several statesmen of prominence are fighting for the return of Jesuits.

... The Wesleyans of Great Britain spend \$100,000 yearly in building chapels in London, and the attendance upon Methodist worship has increased 56 per cent in 20 years.

... The Seventh-day Baptist General Conference, Missionary, Tract, and Educational Societies are to hold their annual session at Milton, Wisconsin, beginning on Fourth-day, Sept. 22d, and closing on Second-day, the 27th.

... Clerical advices from Rome are to the effect that extensive preparations are being made for the celebration of the pope's jubilee. The celebration will begin on New Year's Day and continue until May, six days each week being set aside for the purpose.

... The Year Book of the Young Men's Christian Association for 1886 shows that seventeen new buildings have been completed during the year, and twenty others are in course of erection. There are now ninety Association buildings in the United States and Canada, and the net value of Association property aggregates over \$5,000,000. There are 1,066 Associations in this country, 650 in Germany, 79 in France, 576 in Great Britain, 491 in Holland, 8 in Russia, 2 in China, 8 in Japan, 6 in India, 12 in Africa, 14 in Australia, etc.

... The *New York Observer* is authority for the statement that "in Montreal the population is largely Romanist, but the property of the Protestants is believed to equal that of the Romanists. Under the government which recognizes Romanism as an established church, much of the real estate owned by Catholics is exempt from taxation. The City Council voted a sum of money to pay for Cardinal Tascheran's reception, and it is in the habit of voting money annually for a Roman Catholic festival. It is not necessary to travel very far to see how the public money is used when priests have a controlling influence in politics.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., October 1, 1886.

☞ We are in receipt of a letter from a reader of the SICKLE who objects to this paper on the ground that its positions on many points of Christian doctrine are widely at variance with the positions held by the majority of religious denominations. We respectfully inform our correspondent that he is not judging us by the right standard. The Bible, and not the creeds of popular denominations, is our rule of action, and by that we wish to be judged. If any of our readers discover that we are out of harmony with the Bible, we will be only too willing and anxious to give candid attention to their remonstrances.

☞ With this issue we bring to a close the "Conversations on the Sabbath Question." The object of these articles is to cover the principal points dwelt upon in the average conversation upon this question. The writer has aimed to be perfectly fair, not only in answering the questions of the inquirer, but also in stating the positions of our opponents. We trust the reader will give these articles candid consideration, and be led to form his conclusions in the light of a coming Judgment. We are sure that when our readers comprehend all that is dependent upon a correct view of the Sabbath question, they will not accuse us of dwelling upon it too extensively.

☞ A Baptist minister warns the people against "Thoughts on Daniel," thus: "Let all Bible Christians hands off this hook, and discourage its purchase everywhere. It is a very dangerous book to be in the hands of the masses." To be so very dangerous it must have much show of truth, or else must be in harmony with the false prejudices of the people. Some centuries ago it was taught that the Bible was a dangerous hook to be in the hands of the common people. The hook, "Thoughts on Daniel," contains every word of the hook of Daniel, with brief explanations, chiefly confirming the truth of its prophecies by showing their exact fulfillment in history. If the Bible is a dangerous book, doubtless this is; for it shows by facts of history its truth, and that its interpretations of symbols mean just what they say.

☞ Among the autumn camp-meetings to be held by S. D. Adventists we notice the following appointments: Sauk Center, Minn., Sept. 29 to Oct. 4; Smithland, Iowa, Harrisonville, Mo., and Wabash, Ind., each the same date—Sept. 29 to Oct. 5; Bowling Green, Ky., and New London, Wis., Oct. 6-12; Brighton, Iowa, Oct. 6-11; Wichita, Kansas, Oct. 7-17; Paris, Tenn., Oct. 13-19. All are cordially invited to attend these meetings. Tents will be pitched on the grounds, and rented at low rates for the accommodation of all who may wish to encamp on the grounds during the meetings. This will afford an excellent opportunity for a pleasant and profitable vacation at hut little expense. All should improve it. A dining tent will be operated on the grounds where warm meals or lunches will be served at the most reasonable rates.

☞ The claim of S. D. Adventists, that they are engaged in preaching the last messages of the gospel, as promised in Rev. 14: 6-12, is either true or false. If it is true, it behooves all to heed the warning. If it is false, those who know the truth can prove it false. If this cannot be done, it must be accepted as the truth; for God will surely fulfill his promise, and guard it from a counterfeit fulfillment. Those who believe his word and trust in him, will not be left to be deceived by a false fulfillment of what God has promised.

☞ Certain principles underlie each and every action of man. These principles are the embodiment of his faith, belief, or doctrine, as pertaining to those subjects. It thus becomes self-evident that if one's principles are not founded upon truth, his actions must necessarily be more or less at fault. The closest scrutiny should be given to our principles, with a view to ascertaining whether or no they are founded upon the word of God. It is for this reason that we enter upon searching investigation in the articles published in the SICKLE, hoping thereby to arrive at correct conclusions. We trust our readers will follow us in these investigations, for we assure them that the Bible and the Bible alone shall be our authority.

☞ Why is it that men neglect, or refuse, to study the book of Revelation? Did not Jesus expressly say, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy"? Rev. 1: 3. Who believes this statement of the author of the book itself? The editors of the SICKLE believe it, and hence prayerfully endeavor to read that book, and to teach it to others. And reader, remember that a special blessing is pronounced upon you if you read it. We think it is one of the grandest and most profitable books of the whole Bible.

☞ Christ came the first time in exact and remarkable fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel. The fulfillment was too plain to be denied. What did the unbelieving Jews do? They pronounced a curse upon every person who should undertake to read and explain the prophecies of Daniel. Just so, since the Adventists have shown the fulfillment of the prophecies in the last days, a popular church has turned away from those prophecies, and now they seek to throw discredit upon them, and to give the impression that they cannot be understood at all. Another sign of the times.

☞ We would like to ask a few questions of those who claim that the law of God was all abolished at the cross, and that Christ and his apostles gave us a new law afterward. When was the new law given? what day? at what time? Name it, if you can. Where was it given? in Jerusalem? on the mount of Olives? at Antioch? where? Find it, please. How was it given? vocally? written out? printed? how? Tell us something about it. How many precepts has this new law? ten, or eleven? eight, or twelve? If there is such a law, you certainly should be able to answer these simple questions about it. Which is the first precept? which is the last? Tell us, please. To whom was it given? to the apostles, to the world, to Gentiles, to Jews, to whom? What is the penalty of this new law? Is it death, or stripes, or burning, or hanging, or stoning? What is it? Where do you find it? The fact is that no such new law ever was given, and the man does not live who can find it.

HEAVEN LOCATED.

We clip the following item from a recent number of the *Christian Statesman*. In commenting on the raising of Lazarus from the dead, the *Statesman* says:—

"Lazarus had a great reputation at this time. His name was wide-spread. His presence was much sought. Curiosity drew great multitudes to his door. It was regarded a high privilege to see the man who had been four days in heaven, to hear his voice, and to clasp his hand. This was now the strongest proof of Christ's divinity and mission. The enemies of Jesus hated Lazarus worse than the British hate Bunker Hill Monument. While that man lived, Jesus would be honored. By all means he must be removed. No doubt they were perplexed with the thought that he might not stay dead though he he killed every week. The man who came once from the grave might come as often as he was buried."

The curious part of the foregoing item is the location given for heaven. First it is stated that Lazarus had been in heaven four days, and the last statement is that he came from the grave; hence, according to the *Christian Statesman*, heaven is in the grave. It would be still more curious to know where the *Statesman* will find scripture proof that Lazarus went to heaven at all at that time, and the most curious feature would be for it to explain why, if he did go to heaven, he was called back to this earth. If heaven is a more desirable place than earth, which we suppose all believe, and Lazarus had once entered there, why call him back? The scriptural view of the state of the dead will enable one to avoid such illogical and absurd positions as put forth by our contemporary

"WHOLESOME WORDS."

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing," etc. 1 Tim. 6: 3-5. The apostle held that it made a wide difference what doctrine was taught and believed in the Church; and all Christians will agree with him, that the words of our Lord Jesus Christ are wholesome words. His words make the keeping of the ten commandments the way to eternal life. To the young man who asked him what he should do that he might have eternal life he said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." This referred to the code

of ten precepts. See Matthew 19: 16-19. Those who consent to wholesome words will keep them.

"But," says my friend, "that was spoken before the crucifixion, before the old law was abolished."

Yes, it was. But when was that law abolished? We have some wholesome words to that very point. "Think not," said Jesus, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5: 17-19. The heaven and earth have not yet passed; and the law of God and the words of Christ are not yet abolished. "Heaven and earth," said Jesus, "shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." R. F. C.

CANDID ADMISSIONS

FROM

Sunday Observers and Writers, Concerning the First Day of the Week.

"Admissions in favor of truth from the ranks of its enemies, constitute the highest kind of evidence."—*Pres. Asa Mahan*.

THE EVIDENCE SUMMED UP.

THE conclusion of the whole matter, to quote their own words, is, There is "no positive command" "for keeping holy the first day of the week;" "not on record any divine command" "to change the Sabbath to the first day of the week." And again: "The New Testament is silent about a change of days;" "no express commandment in all the Scriptures;" and "there is not a particle of scripture law;" its "observance" "is not founded on any commandment of God." Again: "Can we find the text" "enjoining" "this day?—No!" "No precept for it" "in the New Testament." Further: "You may search from Genesis to Revelation for a commandment," "but you will search in vain." And again: "It must be owned" that "the usual" "passages are not sufficient." And "it must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day." The "Lord's day is founded not on any commandment of God." And again: There was "no Lord's day instituted by any apostolic mandate." "No ecclesiastical writers of the first three centuries attributed" Sunday "observance either to Christ or his apostles." "The festival of Sunday" "was always only a human ordinance." "The primitive Christians did all manner of work upon the Lord's day." "No law or precept" "given by Christ or the apostles" "for the substitution of the first instead of the seventh day of the week." "The Lord's day had no command that it should be sanctified." "Nor do these [early Christians] in any instance allege any divine command, or even apostolic practice" for it. "And we have not the word of God for us, but rather against us." "The Lord's day had no such commandment" "that it should be sanctified." "By none of the Fathers" was its observance "grounded either on the fourth commandment" or "the precepts of Jesus or his apostles."

And yet again: There is "no expression for observing the first day of the week." The substitution of "the first day of the week for the seventh day is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament." "There is no scriptural authority for so doing." "We meet with no scriptural direction for the change." It is a "fact that there was in reality no divine legislation establishing the Christian Sabbath."

Now we ask in all candor, Why rob the Creator of that which is pre-eminently his? "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." If there is no commandment for the observance of the first day, as these many writers testify (and they have spoken the truth), is it not most fitting that we "return unto the Lord," and walk in the "old paths"? These men were not trying to tear down the first day; on the contrary, very many of them were actually trying to support it at the time they made these remarkable concessions. There is this much in their praise,—they have spoken candidly; THEY HAVE TOLD THE TRUTH!

THE GOSPEL SICKLE,

AN EIGHT-PAGE SEMI-MONTHLY JOURNAL,

Devoted to important Bible doctrines which are especially applicable to the present time,—the Second Coming of Christ; the Nature of Man; the Signs of the Times; Law of God; Plan of Salvation; State of the Dead, and other questions of general interest.

Price, per year, post-paid, - - - 50 cts.
In Clubs of 10 or more, to separate addresses, 40 cts.
In Clubs of 100 to one address, - - - 35 cts.

ADDRESS, REVIEW & HERALD,
Battle Creek, Mich.