

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

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

VOL. 3.

BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN, JANUARY 15, 1888.

No. 2.

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, R. F. COTTRELL,
G. W. AMADON, AND G. W. MORSE.

For Terms, - - - See Last Page.

A SERMON IN RHYME.

If you have a friend worth loving,
Love him—yes, and let him know
That you love him, e'er life's evening
Tinge his brow with sunset glow.
Why should good words ne'er be said
Of a friend, till he is dead?

If you hear a song that thrills you,
Sung by any child of song,
Praise it—do not let the singer
Wait deserved praises long.
Why should one who thrills your heart
Lack the joy you may impart?

If you hear a prayer that moves you
By its humble, pleading tone,
Join it—do not let the seeker
Bow before his God alone.
Why should not your brother share
The strength of two or three in prayer?

If you see the hot tears falling,
Falling from a brother's eyes,
Share them—and thus by the sharing
Own your kinship with the skies.
Why should any one be glad
When a brother's heart is sad?

If a silvery laugh is rippling
Through the sunshine on his face,
Share it—'tis the wise man's saying,
For both grief and joy a place.
There's health and goodness in the mirth
In which an honest laugh has birth.

If your work is made more easy
By a friendly, helping hand,
Say so—speak out brave and truly
Ere the darkness veils the land.
Should a brother workman dear,
Falter for a word of cheer?

Scatter thus your seeds of kindness,
All enlaving, as you go;
Leave them; trust the harvest Giver,
He will make each seed to grow.
So until life's happy end,
You shall never lack a friend.

—Church Union

Notes and Comments.

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HAD Christ changed the Sabbath, and had the apostles kept the first day of the week for the Sabbath, how natural and consistent it would have been for the Jews, while bringing charges against Paul, James, and the other apostles, not only to charge them with disregarding the law of the circumcision, but also with violating the "Jewish Sabbath," and teaching all men to honor the first day of the week as the Sabbath; but the Jews brought no such charge against them.

A DIFFICULTY is encountered by some in their endeavors to harmonize John 3:13 with 2 Kings 2:2, and Heb. 11:5. The first-named text states that "no man hath ascended up to heaven,

but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." The others testify to the translation of Enoch and Elijah. In John 3:13, we understand that Christ is speaking of those who are qualified to give instruction respecting heavenly things. No man of himself can do it; for no man has ascended to heaven and come back to tell us of that place. In this sense the passage has no reference to such cases as Enoch and Elijah, who were translated for another purpose. But Christ is qualified to teach us of heavenly things; for he came down from heaven, and in respect to his knowledge of the place, was, at the time he spoke, the same as if in heaven.

Is there not, says one, a lack of harmony between 1 Cor. 15:50 and Isa. 66:23? Let us see. 1 Cor. 15:50 declares that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"; and Isa. 66:23 declares that in the new earth, when the kingdom of God is established under the whole heavens, all flesh shall come up from month to month and from Sabbath to Sabbath to worship before the Lord. Now, although this latter text speaks of "all flesh," we do not consider that it contradicts 1 Cor. 15:50, inasmuch as it does not speak of "blood" in connection with the flesh. "Flesh and blood," as associated together in 1 Cor. 15:50, we take to be an expression denoting the complete mortality of our present condition. As we are now organized, the blood, a substance which, when taken from the body, passes into a condition of the most speedy and deadly corruption, is the vehicle of life. Lev. 17:11, 14; Deut. 12:23. But in the immortal state, it is said that we are to have "spiritual bodies" (1 Cor. 15:44); and that the life of these spiritual bodies is caused by the Spirit of God by which they are quickened. Rom. 8:11. So in the change that awaits us from mortal to immortality, the blood gives place to the spirit, but the flesh remains, only raised to a higher condition, as it necessarily will be when incorruptible spirit instead of corruptible blood is the vehicle of its life. We can therefore see how flesh, quickened as it then will be, can inherit the kingdom of God, while flesh and blood cannot. Thus 1 Cor. 15:50 is cleared of difficulty, and the discrepancy which at first sight might seem to exist between that text and Isa. 66:23, is found to be only apparent, not real.

ANCIENTLY God said to his people, "In all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect." Ex. 23:13. It is more than probable that this passage means just what it says. Indeed, it is very risky to ever discount the words of the Holy Spirit. When the Lord told his people to offer a dove, it would not have answered to present a raven, or any other bird; when he told them to sacrifice a red heifer, it would not have answered to offer a black or a spotted creature, nor a bison or an ox; when the Lord told Moses to speak to the rock, it made a vast difference when he struck it; when he told Israel to compass the walls of Jericho seven times, it would not have answered to do this five times, nor ten times; and when Christ bade his disciples tarry in Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high, it would not have answered for them to go to Hebron or to Joppa. King Jeroboam once tampered with the word of God, and "ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast

that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar . . . even in the month which he had devised of his own heart." 1 Kings 12:27-33. But the next chapter shows how Heaven regarded this innovation.

The Scriptures say, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Will it answer "just as well" if we keep Friday or Sunday? It will not do to go with the multitude, if the multitude go wrong. And to what class will God say in the great day: "Who hath required this at your hand?"

THE MIGHTINESS OF PRAYER.—"All things," says Christ, "are possible to him that believeth." John writes, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." But the unbelieving world says, "What profit is it that we pray unto Him?" In answer we may say, prayer does not change God in his purposes toward us, but it does change our relations to him. If we were in a skiff on the water, with a cord attached to a tree on an island, by steady pulling we could draw ourselves to the island; but not the island to us. So it is in prayer; by it we change our relations to God. But what has not been wrought out through prayer? It is the mightiest lever that ever mortal hand seized. Moses prays—Amalek is discomfited. Hannah prays—Samuel is born. David prays—Ahitophel hangs himself. Isaiah and Hezekiah pray—an entire Assyrian army lies prostrate in death. Daniel prays—the lions are muzzled. Elijah prays—a three years' drought prevails. Again he prays—the heavens yield a plentiful rain. The church prays—Peter is delivered. Paul and Silas pray—the prison doors open, and a household is converted. Prayer has divided seas, arrested flowing rivers, made flinty rocks gush into fountains, quenched flames of fire, stopped the mouths of lions, disarmed vipers and poisons, marshaled the stars against the wicked, stopped the course of the moon, arrested the sun in his race, burst open iron gates, conquered devils, and commanded legions of angels from heaven. In the language of Ryland, prayer has chained the raging passions of men, and routed armies of proud, blustering atheists. It has brought one man up from the bottom of the sea, and has carried another to heaven in a chariot of fire. What has not prayer done?

ARGUING for the abolition of God's law, some quote Luke 16:16: "The law and the prophets were until John." It should be noted, however, that this text does not say that the law and the prophets ceased at the coming of John. "The law and the prophets were until John." You will notice that the word "were" is supplied. Leaving that out, the whole sentence would read, "The law and the prophets until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." In all such elliptical expressions, words must be supplied in accordance with what is already expressed. The only verb expressed here is the verb "preached." That word determines, therefore, what word should be supplied. Expressed in full, the sentence would then read, "The law and the prophets were preached until John; since that time, the kingdom of God is preached." And the meaning evidently is, that before the time of John, people had only the preaching of the law and the prophets; while now they have, in addition to that, the preaching of the kingdom of God.

Doctrinal Articles.

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

GOD'S COVENANTS WITH MEN.

BY U. SMITH.

IN this closing article on this subject, we have to consider the change which took place when the old covenant was superseded by the new, at the opening of this present dispensation.

We have seen how God's moral law was the basis, or condition on God's part, of the old covenant, inasmuch as he would enter into no negotiations for the formation of that covenant unless they would agree to keep what he calls "his covenant," and obey his voice—that voice by which the ten commandments were three days afterward uttered from Sinai.

The same law he makes the basis of the new covenant. There are many proofs of this fact. In the prophecy of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34), the Lord is very careful to state what position his law should occupy in the new arrangement; and this item receives the first attention in the announcement made. He says: "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." The phraseology of this text obliges us to understand that it is spoken with reference to a law which had once been written somewhere else. When the old covenant was made, there was a remarkable writing given by God. He wrote his law with his own finger, but wrote it upon tables of stone, and had it deposited in the ark. Under the new covenant he promised to write something also; and what was this writing to be?—It was to be his law—the same document which he wrote before. But this time he was to write it in the hearts of his people, instead of upon tables of stone.

But was not this law kept under the old dispensation? and was it not written in the hearts of the people then as well as now? and where, then, is the difference? Some, undoubtedly, like David, could exclaim during that time, "O, how love I thy law!" and "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;" but the Jewish people largely regarded it as an external code, with the letter of which they must scrupulously comply, but with the spirit of which they need not be so much concerned; whereas when a person has the law written in his heart, he regards it as an internal standard reaching the thoughts and intents of the heart; he has respect to the spirit as well as to the letter, and realizes, as the Saviour taught, that to cherish hate is to be guilty of murder, and to harbor impure thoughts and sensual desires is to violate the law of chastity. Obedience becomes true because prompted by love; but it is the same law that is obeyed all the while, only under the new covenant it is more fully and spiritually obeyed than before.

The proposition now before us is further confirmed by some prophecies concerning Christ, the minister of the new covenant. David, speaking of the spirit with which Christ would come into the world to do away with the types and offerings going before, expresses it in these words: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire. . . . Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." There can be no question, in view of this testimony, as to what law was enshrined in the Saviour's heart. It was not the law of sacrifices and typical offerings; for God no longer desired nor required them; but it was God's moral law, which was an embodiment of his "will."

Again, in Isa. 42:21, the prophet, speaking of the future work of Christ, said: "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law and make it honorable." This certainly cannot apply to that law which is called "the enmity," which was "against us," "contrary to us," and which he took "out of the way," and nailed it to the cross. The law which, as minister of the new covenant, he magnified and made honorable, was that law which was within his heart, the one which he explained in all its length and breadth, and taught the people that they must observe if they would enter into life. This was the moral law of ten commandments, in testimony of the immutability of which he "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," in behalf of man, whose crime was that he had broken that law.

When Christ came into the world and commenced his ministry, he took occasion first of all to upbraid

the people for their laxity in regard to the law. The scribes and Pharisees were scrupulous to comply with the text of the law in every particular; but he told the people that their righteousness must exceed that of the classes named, or they could in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. The law was to remain unchanged in jot or tittle so long as heaven and earth should endure, and all his followers were to do and teach all its commandments till that time. Matt. 5:17-20. Then he proceeds to magnify the law by showing how much more it comprehends than they had supposed.

That the same moral law remains under the new covenant that existed under the old, is further shown by the ministry of Christ. His ministry is the antitype of that of the priests under the Mosaic dispensation. So Paul expressly states in Heb. 8:4, 5. Those priests ministered at a sanctuary in the most sacred recess of which—in the ark in the most holy place—reposed the tables upon which God had written his law. With reference to the transgression of that law, which was sin, they performed their ministry. The law was real, sin was real; but the ministry was a shadow. The substance which cast that shadow was the ministry of Christ for sin in this dispensation. Then we ask, in all earnestness, With reference to what law must Christ perform his ministry, which is the antitype of theirs? Every one can see that it must be the very same law, word for word, jot for jot, tittle for tittle. If it is not, then their ministry was not, and could not be, a shadow or type of his; and Paul has misinformed us. To deny that the moral law of this dispensation is identical with that of the old, is to rend the two dispensations apart, and destroy the whole law of type and antitype.

Thus it is evident that the same law which was the basis of the old covenant, is the basis of the new. But if, as our opponents contend, the law of ten commandments was the old covenant to be abolished, the prophecy of the change should have read, This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: I will abolish my law and take it out of their way. Or if the law was not to be abolished, but only changed, that fact should have been noted in some such language as this: This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: I will change my law, and adapt it to the genius of the gospel dispensation.

But it says nothing of this kind, as the reader has sufficiently noticed. It says, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. I will incorporate it into their very being; I will take away the carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, so that it will be their delight to keep it in sincerity and truth.

But if we take the ground of our opponents, what is the difference between the old and new covenants? The old covenant being the ten commandments which the people were then to obey, the new covenant is the code of requirements in force under this dispensation. And what are these?—The same exactly as the original ten with the Sabbath left out? The old covenant was therefore imperfect and faulty, because the Lord had inadvertently put a Sabbath into it; so he undertakes to make a better one by giving the same law over again, leaving the Sabbath out. But as soon as this is done, lo! it is found that the Sabbath cannot be dispensed with; for even man's physical necessities imperatively demand it. Mentally, morally, and physically, society would plunge into complete anarchy and ruin were it not for this beneficent institution.

Now, what shall be done? Under these circumstances, men step in to remedy this defect which the Lord has made in the new covenant; and the apostles, or somebody else, give to the church a new Sabbath.

Then, having a Sabbath inserted, is not the new covenant identically the same as the old? Oh! no; for another day is taken, which, as a Sabbath, has no foundation in fact, and no earthly significance whatever, and the Sabbath is put upon that day, and then it is all right! So the old covenant was one with a seventh-day Sabbath, and the new is one with a first-day Sabbath. The trouble, then, was not with the Sabbath in itself considered, but only with the day on which it was kept. And the only trouble with the day, we must conclude, was, that it was the day on which God rested in the beginning; for that alone gave it all its significance.

This is a fair statement of the case; but does it look like the work of the Lord? Does it not look like the short-sighted and blundering work of men, or rather like the work of the great foe of all righteousness, who is working behind the scenes, to impel

mankind into every species of error and confusion?

If, then, under the new covenant the law which requires the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is written in the heart of every believer, how does it happen that multitudes who have lived under this covenant, and who have certainly enjoyed the blessing and favor of God, have lived and died in the observance of the first day of the week? This is with many a very perplexing question. But we think it is subject to a fair and consistent solution. We reply, that these persons have had the true principle of obedience implanted in the hearts. And they have kept the first day of the week, because they have for a time labored under a misapprehension of what the law requires. In keeping that day they have honestly supposed they were rendering obedience to the fourth commandment of the decalogue; or in not keeping any day in a true Sabbatical sense, they have supposed honestly that God's law required nothing of the kind at their hands. Had they become convinced that the fourth commandment required of them the observance of the seventh day, whether they were keeping another day or no day, would they not have immediately changed their practice accordingly?—Assuredly, every individual of them. Otherwise the principle of obedience was not in their hearts, and they were not in covenant relation with God.

Therefore, leaving them with the Lord, who will deal with all in accordance with the light they have enjoyed, and the sincerity with which they have followed it, it becomes us all to look rather for the truth for our time, and to our own circumstances and obligations. Paul speaks of times of ignorance which God winked at, and at other times of greater light, when he commanded all men everywhere to repent. Our times are of this latter character. Covering after covering which the great apostasy had thrown over the law of God and other portions of his truth, has been lifted off, and men are accountable to God for the increasing light. We are living in days of reform preparatory to the coming of Christ; and we have reached the last reform; for we can find nothing higher or holier than that law of liberty which is designed to develop perfect characters in us, and by which we are to be judged in the last day. James 2:10-12. Friend, you may heretofore have honestly kept the first day of the week for the Sabbath, and have enjoyed the favor of God; but you can do so no longer. The light has now come clearly forth; and before whomsoever it is set, he has no longer a cloak for following the traditions of men.

Blessed be God, for so graciously condescending to take mankind into covenant relation with himself! Reader, are you yet a stranger from these covenants of promise? If so, you are without hope. The present brief scene of turmoil and trouble, and then the regrets, the remorse, and the pains of the second death, for privileges unimproved and mercies abused, are your only portion. In place of this infinite evil, you may have infinite good. Join yourself to the commonwealth of Israel. Christ is the way, and he invites you to come. The promises are of value untold, and will soon be fulfilled. The opportunity will expire by limitation when Christ concludes his work as Mediator. Come while you may. And soon in that heavenly city, which bears upon the twelve foundations with which it is garnished the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and upon its twelve gates of pearl the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and into which all who have entered into covenant relation with God, both of the literal and spiritual seed, will have a right to enter, you will realize what an infinite blessing was couched in that arrangement through which God condescended to be our God, and took us to be his people.

THE TRUE ISRAEL.—3.

BY GEO. I. BUTLER.

WE have taken a brief glance at the rise of the Jewish nation and the reasons which entered into the selection of Abraham and Israel as the heirs of God's promises, and have seen that it was character alone that decided their being chosen; and after glancing at their descendants, we observe many reasons which prove that the same principle continued to have force. It seems to us that God's people stood much on the same ground as now. In this dispensation, multitudes unite themselves to the organized church, and call themselves, and are called by others, Christians, when it is evident God does not own them as his people; while at the same time through these bodies

are scattered souls whom Christ recognizes as his true people. So in the old dispensation, the nation, and those who united with it according to the established laws of that dispensation, were known as Israel; while the great mass of them God did not acknowledge. Yet he had a chosen few who walked in the steps of faithful Abraham, whom he did acknowledge as the "true Israel" of God.

We now come to the special light of the writers of the gospel dispensation. On this and many other subjects all will admit that there is a degree of doubt and uncertainty in the Old Testament writings, and that we need the comments of the New. These writers were inspired by the same Spirit as were the writers of the Old Testament; and as that Spirit was given them in greater measure, we should welcome their expositions with gladness. Let us, then, examine their testimony.

Matt. 3:7-9: "But when he [John the Baptist] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." We observe that the two classes here spoken of were the special religionists of that age, and that they evidently felt much exalted that they were descended from Abraham according to the flesh, thinking, as many do now, that that fact would be of great benefit to them, and that their possessing an evil character would not affect the fact that they were entitled to blessings by virtue of their descent. But John strikes at the very root of their notion, and shows that true repentance is necessary, and that their lives must be right, or their descent would not benefit them; and as far as being children of Abraham, God, who made man originally from dust, could take the stones before them and make children unto Abraham. Had God done this, which John says he could do, these newly created children of Abraham would certainly not be descended from him according to the flesh; so we conclude that lineal descent is not necessary to make a man a child of Abraham in the Bible sense. And observe further, that this was before those special laws were abolished which made them a separate people; and if such was the case then, how much more so would it be when those peculiar barriers were broken down!

John 1:47: "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Here we see Christ recognizes the distinction we have already noticed. Some are called Israelites in name; while there are some, like Nathanael, who are such "indeed." And this one was without "guile," showing that the character decides the question of the genuine article.

John 8:33, 37-41, 44: "They [the Jews] answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" Says the Saviour, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed [i. e., literally descended from him]; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father; and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." Jesus said unto them, "Ye are of your father the Devil."

We call this decisive testimony, and it comes from the Son of God, the light of both dispensations. Here were the literal Jews, proud of their ancestor Abraham, and trusting in that fact. As far as literal descent was concerned, their genealogy was untarnished. "They were not born of fornication." Jesus himself says, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed." They had their family records preserved, through which they proved their ancestry. But the Saviour tells them plainly that they were not the children of Abraham in the true sense. The children of Abraham would do as he did. In order, then, to belong to his seed, according to the Saviour, we must possess the same character. Their actions were the test which determined where they belonged. They were children of the Devil. Their literal descent did not make them true Israelites at all. And this we observe was before the middle wall of partition was broken down in the Jewish dispensation. Take with this the testimony of John the Baptist,

which we have noticed, and we have these two facts: Real children of Abraham could be "raised up" who never had any fleshly descent from him, and those who have the clearest claims to such descent were not reckoned as his children at all, unless possessing the requisite character.

Says the apostle Paul, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Gal. 6:15, 16. Whiting renders it "even on the Israel of God," instead of "and upon the Israel of God." The Greek conjunction *kai*, according to Greenfield, may be rendered "even" as well as "and," and it is very evident that Whiting has given the true idea of the apostle. Circumcision, he tells us, is of no consequence whatever. Heretofore, those who practiced it, and were separated from others by it, and known by name as Israel, might be excused for thinking it gave them an apparent right to the title, although we have seen that in that dispensation it did not constitute them the "true Israel;" but now, since it is of no consequence at all, what excuse can there be for those who still tell us it makes a man an Israelite? How plainly the apostle recognizes the great principle we have been noticing: "As many as walk according to this rule, [doubtless referring back to what he says in verse 10: "Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith,"] peace be on them, even on the Israel of God." It is such as these, then, who walk by this rule, who are the real "Israel of God," and no others.

In this same epistle, we read again, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:27-29. We inquire in what sense these different classes were "one in Christ Jesus." We know that in the minds of men, national, social, and sexual distinctions have ever been maintained. But we understand that in the mind of God each one of these classes stands upon the same ground. He is no more a respecter of persons or nations. Any one may come to him through Jesus our Lord, and be just as freely accepted as another. And especially is this true in reference to the future promises of God which were given to Abraham's seed; every one who is Christ's will share in these promises. And if to be Christ's entitles a person to be considered of the true seed, evidently not to be his will shut us away from them. So, then, those who have, above all others, hated Christ, putting him to death, persecuting his disciples, and who have instilled into their children the most intense hatred of him,—the Jewish nation,—can certainly have no part in these promises of which Paul tells us Christ's disciples are "heirs." National distinctions, then, are obliterated in the minds of God, and to be a true disciple of Christ gives us a claim to the future promises.

And yet, in plain view of such testimony as this, we find men standing up and telling the people that those distinctions continue in full force, and that the fleshly seed, with eighteen hundred years of concentrated detestation of Christ culminating on them in this generation, are soon to take exclusive possession of these promises made to Abraham.

Eph. 2:12-15, 19; 3:6: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body," etc. We here have two classes: 1. "The commonwealth of Israel," explained in the same connection by the apostle to be "saints," and the "household of God;" and 2. Those who are called "aliens," "strangers," and "foreigners." These are said to be separated from each other by a "middle wall of partition," or certain "commandments contained in ordinances." The first class have some very precious things, certain "covenants of promise," a "hope," and a "God," and a "Christ;" while the

second class are shut out of these by this "wall of partition." Christ comes and dies, and as a consequence, what follows? Let us illustrate: There are two flocks of sheep, one in a beautiful pasture of clover where they can thrive, the other in a barren waste, trampled and burned. The fence between them is taken away, and the consequence, of course, is, that those in the poor pasture at once go in where there is food to be obtained. So those who are "made nigh by the blood of Christ," enter into all the blessings "promised" to the "commonwealth of Israel."

The only barrier, then, that ever existed between Israelites and Gentiles has been broken down by the death of Christ. Who is he that shall rise up and declare that this wall is still keeping the two apart, when the great apostle says "both" parties are made "one"? It is folly. There is not the slightest intimation in the scripture that this "broken wall" is ever to be erected again, and no one attempts to find any. There were never two walls separating these two parties. Then if a person denies that these classes have become one, does he not deny the apostle's declaration? Let us notice what the apostle calls the first class. He calls them "saints," and the "household of God." This is strong evidence that our position is correct, and that in the old dispensation, before the breaking down of this "wall" between the two, the only ones ever recognized as the "true Israel" were the children of God. What is the meaning of the word "saint"?—"A holy or godly person; one eminent for piety."—*Webster*. This term never could embrace wicked Jews, such as the majority of that nation have always been. Only the righteous portion, then, are recognized by the apostle as the "commonwealth of Israel." With these, those Gentiles who are true Christians become "fellow-heirs," that is, heirs to the same promises.

REDEMPTION GREATER THAN CREATION.

Is it not strange that first-day advocates who claim that their faith and practice are founded on the doctrines set forth in the New Testament, and that their sole desire is to glorify Jesus and obey his teachings, should be so oblivious to his most plain and oft-repeated declarations? We read: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." John 5:30. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." John 4:34. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." John 6:38. "My Father is greater than I." John 14:28. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21.

Despite these and very many similar declarations by our Lord, it is gravely asserted: "Redemption is greater than creation, and therefore it was that Christ changed the Sabbath to the first day of the week."

This is simply asserting that Christ came to destroy the eternal memorial of creation, established by his Father as the sign between himself and his children forever; that he did annul and efface that memorial; and, further, that he instructed his disciples to trample upon and despise the sacred seventh day, so blessed and hallowed by the Father. This is teaching that all Christians should make the seventh day a day of secular work, instead of abstaining from labor upon it; and that in its place they should observe the first day of the week, a day that ignores alike the Creator and the work of creation, and by keeping which they honor and glorify the Son at the expense of the Father. Oh! well might our Lord inquire, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"—*Selected*.

THOSE who propose to build upon the New Testament alone, are for building in the air, without a foundation. God's ways and works are perfect from the beginning. The foundation of God standeth sure. He never tears down that he may build larger or better. The church of God is built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. The foundation laid in the times of the most ancient prophets will never crumble. It is able to sustain the superstructure. Christ, as well as the law, was in the Old Testament; the law, as well as Christ, is in the New. The New Testament constantly refers to the Old. The ancient foundation is sound and good. Take away that foundation, and the whole must fall. But the Rock of Ages is firm of old, and endures forever.



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

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., JANUARY 15, 1888.

WHY NOT BE HONEST?

A WRITER in a religious exchange, discussing the question, "Who are required to keep the Sabbath?" says:—

"For two thousand five hundred years after the creation, we hear nothing of the Sabbath. Then God, in fulfillment of his promise to Abraham, took his natural descendants by the hand and led them out of bondage, and on the same day made a covenant with them. Nehemiah says (9:14), 'And *made known* unto them *thy holy Sabbath*, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws by the hand of Moses thy servant.' If the Sabbath had been known to, and observed by, Abraham and the fathers, God could not have *made it known* to them by the hand of Moses."

A more careful perusal of the record would have revealed to this writer that what Nehemiah speaks of as being made known to the children of Israel, was made known *at Sinai*, not before. Take the verse before, in connection with the one above quoted, and we have this record: "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 *made known* unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws by the hand of Moses thy servant."

The Sabbath is spoken of as here being made known, not by Moses, but by God; and when was it?—When he came down upon Sinai. Had the people no knowledge of it before this time? We turn to Exodus 16, and there learn that *one month and three days* before they came to Sinai, the people well understood in regard to the Sabbath, and that God took the Sabbath commandment as the one by which to test the obedience of the people to his law! Yet the writer of the article in question puts the matter in such a way as to try to mislead the unguarded reader into the idea that previous to the time of which Nehemiah speaks, the people had no knowledge of that institution!

The record of Exodus 16 cannot be ignored. To write upon the Sabbath question without being aware of the events recorded in that chapter, is to treat the subject ignorantly; to be aware of them, and then try to keep the attention of the reader from them, is to treat the subject dishonestly.

Nehemiah says that God made known the Sabbath on Sinai; Moses, in Exodus 16, says that they knew of it more than a month before they came to Sinai. If the position of our contemporary on Nehemiah's testimony is correct, there is a hopeless contradiction between these two passages.

But before coming to such a hasty and summary conclusion, the candid investigator will ask another question; namely, Does the expression "made known" necessarily signify bringing to one's knowledge for the first time? If it does, there is a contradiction between Nehemiah 9 and Exodus 16. If it does not, the argument which is made on the point, becomes null and void. We prefer to take the ground that the writer in question is wrong, rather than that the Bible contradicts itself.

What, then, is the meaning of the expression "made known," used by Nehemiah in reference to the Sabbath at Sinai? and how was it made known?—It was made known in the same way that God made himself known to Israel in Egypt: "Thus saith the Lord God: In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and *made myself known* unto them in the land of Egypt." Eze. 20:5. Yet the children of Israel in Egypt were not without a knowledge of God; for the Hebrew women feared him (Ex. 1:17); and the people in their distress cried unto him. Num. 20:16; Deut. 26:7, etc. His making himself known unto them was therefore simply a more full and immediate revelation of himself to them, just as it was said to the Jews, that Moses gave them circumcision, though this ordinance was established with Abraham. So of the Sabbath at Sinai; it was unfolded before them in a more formal, impressive, and complete manner

than ever before, by the voice of God; and in this sense it was made known to them, though they had a knowledge of it and kept it before that time.

As to the silence of Genesis respecting the Sabbath, the explicit account we have of the institution of the Sabbath at the beginning, the fact that time was reckoned by weeks, which could come from nothing but the institution of the Sabbath, the fact that the principles of the moral law were well understood, and that Abraham kept God's statutes, commandments, and laws, is certainly enough in a brief record which condenses the history of twenty-five hundred years into fifty chapters, and aims to touch only upon the more important historical points of that time. But however men may attempt to prove the Sabbath not binding, because of the silence of Genesis, their efforts are all rendered abortive by the fact that the Sabbath comes to the surface in Exodus 16 as an institution well known more than a month before the giving of the law on Sinai.

Two facts are exceedingly troublesome to opposers of the Sabbath: 1. That the Sabbath was known and kept before Sinai, as we have shown. 2. That the disciples of Christ kept it according to the commandment, this side the cross. Luke 23:56. For if the Sabbath was observed before Sinai, it is impossible to show that it was not kept from creation down; and if it was binding upon the disciples the day after the crucifixion, it is impossible to show that it is not binding now. If they could only confine the Sabbath to the period between Sinai and the cross, how they would rejoice! The jubilee of Rev. 11:10 would be enacted over again. But they cannot do this; hence this wriggling and chafing, fretting and twisting, over irrefragable but unwelcome facts. But we have no sympathy to waste upon them, till they shall be willing to humble their hearts enough to bow to the cross and accept the truth. U. S.

THE DANGERS OF IDOLATRY.

THAT man is naturally a religious being is too evident to need demonstrating here. Many, however, take it for granted that because of this natural tendency of mankind, there is little danger but they will be sufficiently religious to meet the requirements of the case, without giving more than very casual, half-hearted attention to their worship. This undoubtedly accounts for a vast amount of the carelessness and indifference that is seen in the world, and for much of the coldness and unconcern among professors of religion. Men are prone to allow nature to take its course, erroneously concluding that in so doing they will not come very far amiss. In adopting this principle, one needs to be carefully guarded, in order that in following it he does not go downward instead of upward. It is sometimes true that to follow one's own nature is safe and correct, and sometimes true that it is the reverse of this. In Eph. 2:3 Paul speaks of some who were "by nature the children of wrath, even as others." James 3:6 points out the danger of having the "course of nature" set on fire by the tongue. In 1 Cor. 2:14 Paul states that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 2 Peter 2:10, 12 indicates that to follow the course of nature after a certain manner will cause such to become "as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed." In following the course of nature, then, one must needs be very wise and cautious lest he make a very grave mistake in the selection of instincts.

That we are to take nature as our guide and teacher in some things is conclusively shown. 1 Cor. 11:14 is a case in point. 2 Tim. 3:3 speaks of a "natural affection" that some wicked classes will be without in the last days.

There is another principle, or we may say a well-proved and accepted fact, that is quite as important as the one first stated, and more to the purpose of this article. It is this: That man, in and by the process of his worshipping, becomes assimilated to the moral character of the object that he worships. The saying that "An honest man is the noblest work of God," has been changed by some philosophers so as to read, "An honest god is the noblest work of man." With idolaters the latter rendering is certainly the more appropriate, and those who prefer it thereby supply evidence that indicates a leaning toward idolatry. Certainly, if we are left to create, by imagination or otherwise, the objects that we will worship, no better principle could be enunciated. But are we idolaters? The question is easily answered. If we worship a

god of our own choosing, a god whose attributes, even, are of our own choosing, we are idolaters.

Idol worship is, in the very nature of the case, debasing to the worshiper. It is utterly impossible for a nation of idolaters to rise in the scale of morality, I care not how sincerely or devotedly they perform their worship. A few considerations will show that this statement is correct. In idolatry, the object of worship is a creation of the worshiper. No human being can create a god that is superior to himself; it must be inferior; for in this as in other matters, the principle holds good that a stream cannot, naturally, rise higher than its source of supply. The tendency is downward, and that continually. The idol worshiper, then, worships an object inferior to himself, and upon the principle before stated that the worshiper becomes assimilated to the moral character of the object that he worships, it is self-evident that the natural and unavoidable tendency of idolatry is downward.

In the light of the foregoing, it is very easy to understand why the world has been and still is growing worse instead of better. Satan taught the first lesson in idolatry in the Garden of Eden, and the human race have been learning and practicing idolatry ever since. Just as true as that the practice of idolatry lowers the worshipers in the scale of morality, so true is it that if we see a people descending in the scale of morality we may know they are, to a certain extent at least, idolaters. If one statement is true, the other is also. Carry the reasoning a little further. If a people are not actually rising in the scale of morality, there is occasion to be suspicious of their worship. Do you want to know whether or not you are an idolater? Do you want to know whether or not any given body of people are idolaters? We have indicated the rule by which the discovery may be made. Which way are you or they progressing as regards morality?

The conclusion has no doubt been reached ere this, in the mind of the reader, that in order for a people to ascend in the scale of morality, they must worship a god other than of their own creation; they must, in fact, worship the God of the Bible—the God of divine revelation. Herein we get a glimpse of how utterly lost and hopeless would be the human race without divine revelation. They could not by any possibility rise, but must continue descending until the lowest possible depths of degradation are reached, and they become, eventually, extinct. Let those who sneer at revelation as a myth, ponder upon this inevitable conclusion. Just as sure as there is not a God of revelation, just so sure is the human race doomed to final extinction by a natural downward process. The prospect would indeed be a gloomy one were such the case. In 2 Peter 2:12 the case of those who worship other than the God of revelation is clearly stated: "These, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption."

But a simple knowledge of the true God will profit nothing unless he be worshiped. It becomes evident that the worshiper must know something about the attributes of that God; he must know what his will is; he must know, in short, what constitutes acceptable worship. We are conscious of the immeasurable superiority of the Creator; evidences of his unlimited power are abundant. All nature, nay, the entire universe, *proclaims* a Creator, but we must look elsewhere to find that Creator *revealed*. Nature *intimates* a Creator, but she does not *reveal* him nor his attributes as man requires that he should be revealed in order for him to render acceptable worship. His power, we say, is demonstrated in a manner at once stupendous and convincing. Discovering our own nothingness, our own weakness, our entire dependence upon a power higher than ourselves, how natural that we should endeavor to know what that superior being really is, what his attributes are, and by what means we may live and act so as to please him! We are in his hands; we are dependent upon him for the food we eat, the water we drink, and even the air we breathe. When we lie down at night to pass into a condition of unconsciousness, of absolute defenselessness, who will guard us but God? Who but he can cause our hearts to continue beating, our respiratory organs to continue acting?—None. Oh, it would seem as though we would leave no effort untried, no means unused, to *know* such a kind, merciful, powerful Father, and to conform our lives to his will!

Here, then, is presented the most powerful argument in favor of studying the Holy Scriptures; for

they are the only source whereby we may learn what we need to learn of the only true Object of worship and his attributes. All study of nature should be in the light of divine revelation in order to be of greatest good to us. As we study the Bible and nature, our most earnest prayer should be, "O Lord, herein help us to learn of thee."

We should not forget that the worshiper will, in any event, become assimilated to the moral character of the object he worships. It is possible for one to know of the true God, and even to study the Bible, and yet stand low in the scale of morality. If one fails to comprehend God's true character and attributes, just to that extent will he fail of reaching the position that true worshipers of God should reach. Our worship of God will not be of any higher character than our estimate of him and his attributes. If we create in our own imagination certain attributes that we think God ought to possess, and gauge our worship of him by those attributes with which we have clothed him, that worship becomes a species of idolatry, and the result cannot be otherwise than disastrous upon ourselves and displeasing to God. In no case shall we receive a greater degree of benefit from our worship, or be made in any sense better by it than the standard we ourselves have fixed for the God we worship. What shall we say, then? That a man's standard or estimate of what God and his attributes are, is shown by what the man himself is? The principle seems a sound one. Doubtless there are other considerations that should be taken into account, but on general principles this rule is a correct one. Even idolaters accept this principle. In China, the priests say, "Think of Buddha and you will be transformed into Buddha. If men pray to Buddha and do not become Buddha, it is because the mouth prays and not the mind." Worship is reflexive in its effects upon the worshiper.

Christ enunciated a principle when he healed the two blind men, that is more comprehensive than is generally realized. He said: "According to your faith be it unto you." By the term "faith" here is meant one's system of religious belief, his comprehension of God and his attributes, as well as faith in the abstract. We would not say that God does not give us more than we ask for, nor that the favors we receive from him are no greater in measure nor higher in standard than our comprehension of God; but we do say that the answers we receive vary according to our comprehension of God and his attributes. James says (chap. 4:3), "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." When men qualify their prayers with mental reservations in which is suggested the use the Lord will suffer them to make of the favors for which they pray, they are taking a great responsibility upon themselves, and the chances are that their prayers will not be answered in the direction desired.

On general principles, men will do about what they believe God will suffer them to do; and hereby is suggested a rule for determining man's estimate of God. See in what his life consists; what principles he exemplifies in his daily conduct and intercourse with his fellow-men; what his home relations are; how he is esteemed in his neighborhood; what his character is for faithfulness and trustworthiness. Examine yourself in these and other particulars, and thereby ascertain what is your true estimate of God and his attributes. We are all tinctured with idolatry; we all have something to do, more or less, by way of establishing, according to our own standard, the character of the God we worship. Just to the extent that we do this, are we idolaters; and idolatrous worship is lowering instead of elevating in its tendency. Herein may be discovered the secret of a vast amount of the stationary religion there is in the world,—the reason why so many professed Christians make no visible progress from year to year. Their worship is so largely tinctured with idolatry that they cannot progress. Their idolatrous tendencies counterbalance their true worship, and so they remain practically stationary.

The conclusion is irresistible and emphatic, that a continual, faithful, earnest, and devoted study of the Scriptures is of paramount importance if we would be kept from idolatrous tendencies. The God we should worship is therein revealed, and his attributes made known; and by no other means can we become familiar with the same. When a principle is found, it should be learned, and made a part of our very selves; and thus, by persistent attention, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, which should be continually invoked, we may indeed follow the admonition of

Paul in Rom. 12:2: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

G. W. M.

SPIRIT REVELATIONS.

THE doctrine of the immortality of the soul must, like water, find its level at last. It has often been shown that if the arguments which are drawn either from the Scriptures or philosophy to prove that man is immortal and conscious in death, do establish that doctrine, they also establish the doctrine that all forms of animal existence, beasts, birds, and creeping things, are equally immortal and conscious in death.

But few persons have had the temerity to admit this logical conclusion of their reasoning, and accept all brutes as brothers, acknowledging their title to the same plane of life and dignity. To admit this would be too severe a strain upon their spirit of self-exaltation; besides, it would be to surrender that which they roll as so sweet a morsel under their tongue,—the charge against us of a materialism so gross that we bring the human family all down upon a level with the brute, and make a man no better than a horse. But they must make the fatal admission, or surrender their claim to the high prerogative of consciousness in death, and everlasting life on the ground of creation.

But the spirits, more daring or reckless or ironical than men, are coming to own squarely the inevitable conclusion, according to their premises, that all animals have an immortal hereafter. In the *Banner of Light* of Oct. 22, 1887, in the department of "Questions Answered through the Mediumship of Miss M. T. Shelhamer," this question is asked: "Do children have animal pets in the other world?" From the answer we quote the following:—

"This, we assure you, is a fact, and it is no uncommon sight for one passing through the various avenues of the spirit-life, to behold some child caring for some pet animal it loved on earth, but which has died, so far as material life is concerned. It is no uncommon sight for us to see children, and men and women, surrounded by their pet birds, filling the air with music. In the higher conditions of the spirit-world, there are not altogether the same forms of animals which have been known on earth, because the conditions for the existence of such are not found there; yet *all life*, however expressed or manifested in the past, *must exist* somewhere."

LOVING DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT.

In the same paper appears a paragraph designed as an apology for the fact that spirits seek a darkened room for their manifestations, but affording a pretty good comment on the words that they "love darkness rather than light." The spirit says:—

"All the sounds on the earth seem about five times louder to spirits than they do to mortals. . . . If there is any racket outside, it disturbs us somewhat, but not so much as if it was in here, because an influence goes out from you. The light on the earth affects us just exactly as the sun affects you; it makes you wink every time you look at it. Whatever is *bright or loud* on the earth affects us when we get control, and so spirits need to have it quiet and a little darker than people do."

This sets forth exactly the conditions required by the works of darkness. They wish to have the light excluded, as that troubles them; and they must have it very quiet, so that, as the prophet says, they may "peep" and "mutter." Isa. 8:19.

But it is as poets that the spirits make about the most dismal failure! In the same copy of the *Banner*, we find a poem on "Autumn Leaves," purporting to be given by the "spirit of Alice Cary." For the edification of the reader we quote the first two stanzas, which read as follows:—

"Hark! I hear the lovely sound
Of crispy leaves along the ground;
And well I know the pretty things
Are loosed from summer fastenings,

"And whirl about in eddied rings,
Like butterflies with tinted wings;
Oh! hark, my heart gives welcome sound,
To hear the autumn leaves go round."

To accuse Alice Cary of saying that her "heart gives welcome sound, to hear the autumn leaves go round," is enough to make her bones rise up and smash their coffin into kindling-wood, from sheer chagrin and vexation of spirit. The *Banner* must have more respect for "spirits" than we have, to admit such doggerel into its columns. U. S.

GOOD temper, like a sunny day, sheds a brightness over everything. It is the sweetener of toil, and the soother of disquietude.—*Irving*.

BIBLE CONVERSION AND GROWTH IN GRACE:

OR SANCTIFICATION AS TAUGHT IN THE SCRIPTURES.

THE agencies for the accomplishment of sanctification are the truth, the Holy Spirit, faith, and obedience. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth," is the petition of the Son to the Father. Error, however venerable from age, cannot sanctify men. Again: says Jesus, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." We may emphatically say of the law of God proclaimed upon mount Sinai, that it is his "truth." "Thy law is the truth." "All thy commandments are truth." Ps. 119:142, 151. By means of the law Paul was convinced of sin. Rom. 7:7. And he affirms, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

It is difficult to comprehend how one who rejects the law of God can have a knowledge of sin which would lead him to fly from it to the Saviour. Nor can we conceive how one can attain unto sanctification without the truth; for if it could be so, why the prayer of the Saviour, "Sanctify them through thy truth"?

Says Charles G. Finney, president of Oberlin (Ohio) College, "I have long been satisfied that the higher forms of Christian experience are attained only as a result of a terribly searching application of God's law to the human conscience and heart." Adam Clarke says, "Man cannot have a true notion of sin but by means of the law of God." Professor Brown, of Brown University (Baptist), says, "You can no more change the moral law than attempt to change God himself."

But this finishing work of the grace of God upon the heart, to prepare men for the kingdom of glory, is not accomplished by the law alone—the Holy Spirit must act its part. Paul says, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. 2:13.

The steps here are, hearing the truth, believing the truth, receiving the Spirit, and experiencing its sanctifying power; thus connecting with the truth or the word of God, faith, and the purifying and elevating influence of that divine power which "heareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God," "being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Rom. 15:16. Again: says Peter, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." 1 Peter 1:2. Here the subject of obedience is introduced as an important factor in the work of sanctification. So we have the fact before us that the truth (the word of God), the operation of the Holy Spirit, the energizing, vitalizing power of faith, with cheerful obedience, are the warp and woof of the agencies of Bible sanctification.

And here let it be remarked, the Spirit of God and his word do not lead nor work in opposite directions in the accomplishment of sanctification. As well might the telegraph agent talk of dispensing with the long lines of wires stretching themselves over the earth, and declare that he could control the electric current, sending messages everywhere through the air, as for one to claim sanctification by the Spirit, while the teachings of God's word are repudiated. Speaking of the worship of the Father, the Saviour says, "They that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24. Says Adam Clarke, "A man worships God in *spirit* when, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, he brings all his affections, appetites, and desires to the throne of God; and he worships him in *truth* when every purpose and passion of his heart, and when every act of his religious worship, are guided and regulated by the word of God."

The sanctification recognized and enjoined by the Bible is not partial in application nor superficial in character; its office is to change the entire man. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5:17. Says Paul: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. One sanctified "wholly," then, is sanctified, spirit, soul, and body, and this must embrace the whole man.

I think it cannot be denied that the apostle, in the

prayer here quoted, has special reference to the last church, certainly not if it be read in connection with the fourth chapter, verses 13-18, and in connection with the first verses of the fifth chapter. We, then, as a people, should be deeply interested in the subject; for in addition to the prayer for the entire sanctification, he adds, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Here is positive proof that this work will be accomplished.

By the term *spirit*, in the text under consideration, we understand the apostle to mean the mind, the same as in Colossians 2:5: "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." This with all its God-given faculties and powers, should be consecrated to our Creator. The mind may be "carnal," "enmity against God," "not subject to the law of God;" or it may be such that with it we may serve the law of God. It was not until Paul had so learned to reverence the will of God, and brought his own will in subjection to it, as to enable him meekly to pen the truth, "so, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God," that he could exclaim in joyful accents, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

It will next be in order to notice some of the faculties or powers of the mind, which should bear evidence of having experienced the work of sanctification, provided the spirit shall have been wholly sanctified.

A. S. HUTCHINS.

A SUPPOSED DIFFICULTY AND ITS POSITIVE SOLUTION.

It is not often that a person sets forth what he considers a *formidable* objection against a certain faith, and then proceeds to demolish his objection with an undeniable fact. But such a thing I have seen of late. The objection is, that they who observe the seventh day do not and cannot observe the same period together. It is stated thus:—

"So, very few of them, even on this earth, observe the same period together. While some of them are keeping Sabbath on one part of the earth, others of them are at work on another part of the earth."

There is nothing new or novel in this statement; it is the reiteration of an oft-exploded objection, of no possible force in itself, as no person of common intelligence who kept or keeps the seventh day ever supposed that they did or do keep the same hours together. Nor did they ever think that the necessity existed for them to do so. Therefore the objection needs no notice for its own sake. I notice it because of the excellent solution which the objector gave of his supposed difficulty. It is found in the following words:—

"In fact, it takes just forty-eight hours, or the time of two whole days, from the time any one day first begins in the extreme east till it ends at the farthest place in the west. Will the reader stop and think carefully, sharply, on this point? for it is an important one. It takes twenty-four hours for the first end of a day to go clear around the earth. Then as the last end of a day is twenty-four hours behind the first end, it must also have twenty-four hours to go clear around the earth, and that makes forty-eight hours that each day is on the earth somewhere."

Also in this statement there is nothing new, but its importance here is in its connection. Sabbath-keepers do not think they keep the same hours everywhere at the same time, but they do insist that they keep *the same day*, which is what the commandment requires. The objector first supposes that is impossible, because when one is keeping the Sabbath at one point, another has already kept the Sabbath, or another has not yet commenced. But why is there no difficulty?—Because, as the objector states, "forty-eight hours each day is on the earth somewhere." And if so, and so it is, then all the inhabitants of the earth together have forty-eight hours in which to keep the same day of twenty-four hours. That is, taking all parts of the earth together, they have the length of two days in which to keep any one day. Now, any person can see that that is all the time they need to keep the same day of twenty-four hours all around the earth. Where, then, is the difficulty? It has no existence in fact. Only two things prevent our thanking the objector for the solution; first, his solution is not new; and, secondly, his intention was not as good as his solution.

We hope every reader will comply with the request to "think carefully, sharply, on this point." The commandment says the seventh day—no more, no less, and no otherwise. And the inhabitants of the earth have forty-eight hours in which to observe that same

identical seventh day. And that is all they need to keep the same day all around the earth.

J. H. WAGGONER.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

No DOCTRINE is more clearly revealed in the Scriptures than this, that God will punish every man that goes on in iniquity, and that he will do this according to every man's measure of guilt. That this will be indescribably awful, many passages plainly teach. We have no disposition to represent this punishment as of momentary duration, or to compare it with even the most painful death that we witness in this world. Because we teach that God will inflict the second death upon all transgressors, some have concluded that we hold this to be simply the equivalent of death as we now see it. But this is far from being the case. We fully credit all those scriptures which set forth the terrible nature of the second death. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But we do assert that wicked men will not live in the fire of hell to all eternity, and that sin will not have an unending existence. We think many testimonies and many plain facts confirm this statement. We do not rely alone upon one class of texts, but upon the plain testimonies of a great number of witnesses. The wicked shall die the second death (Rom. 6:23; Rev. 21:8); they shall be devoured (Ps. 21:9; Rev. 20:9); they shall be consumed (Ps. 37:20; 59:13); they shall perish (Ps. 73:27; John 3:15, 16); they shall be burned up root and branch (Mal. 4:1-3); they shall be destroyed soul and body (Isa. 47:14, *margin*; Matt. 10:28); they shall be as though they had not been. Obadiah 16. We call attention to several great facts:—

1. God shut out man from the tree of life, that he might not live forever.
2. He will give an immortal existence to the righteous only, and that at the sound of the last trump.
3. The punishment of the wicked will take place when God burns our earth. This great conflagration will constitute the lake of fire.
4. The earth will not burn to all eternity; for there will be a new earth created from the ashes of the old.
5. God will have a clean universe, and none but holy beings will then remain alive.

One great fact concerning man's state in death is settled by the examination of the Bible; men are not rewarded nor punished till the Judgment has first taken place. We cite a passage relative to the wicked, because of its emphatic statement of this doctrine: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of Judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2:9. Let us now consider the foregoing propositions relative to the punishment of the wicked.

1. Is it true that God excluded man from the tree of life lest he should in his fallen state *live forever*? Here are the words of the Bible: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and *live forever*; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." Gen. 3:22, 23. No one will deny that the words "live forever" are to be taken in their natural and obvious sense. God's purpose is distinctly revealed in them. Man as a sinner is not to live forever. This great fact is thus announced at the very beginning of the Bible, and we may be sure that subsequent testimonies do not contradict it.

2. But is it also true that immortality does not belong to man by nature? and is the gift of God to the righteous only, and that not till the sounding of the last trump?—So the Scriptures plainly teach. Thus Paul says: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Rom. 2:6-9. Immortality is therefore the gift of God to those only who seek it by patient continuance in well-doing. It is certain, then, that man does not possess immortality by nature. Paul also fixes the time when God shall give immortality to his people: "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,

at the last 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." 1 Cor. 15:51-53. This is the time, and this is the manner, in which the righteous are to be made immortal.

3. Is it also a fact that the burning earth is to constitute the lake of fire wherein the wicked shall be punished? Solomon thus states the place of punishment: "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." Prov. 11:31. The time and place for the perdition of ungodly men is when our earth which now is shall be dissolved with fervent heat. At that time the earth will be made new, and in it the righteous shall be recompensed. "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "But 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." 2 Peter 3:7, 10. Our earth will not be burned till the day of Judgment. The wicked are not to be punished till that day. 2 Peter 2:9. But when God melts the earth, then shall come the perdition of ungodly men.

Malachi states this great fact in these words: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 4:1, 3. Here is Peter's burning day, and here also is the perdition of all the ungodly in the lake of fire. John, who speaks so emphatically concerning the lake of fire, plainly teaches that the place where the wicked shall be punished is our earth. For after the resurrection of the unjust, they come up on the breadth of the earth and surround the camp of the saints, and then fire from God out of heaven comes down and devours them. Rev. 20:9. We have therefore fully proved that our earth is to be the place of the fire wherein the wicked shall be punished.

4. Is it true that this lake of fire, after consuming the wicked and after melting the earth, shall cease to burn? and that there shall be a new earth that shall spring from the ashes of the old, wherein the just shall dwell? Malachi plainly teaches that the fire shall cease to burn after devouring the wicked, and that the very place where the wicked were burned shall become the abode of the saints. For he speaks of what shall follow the burning day: "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 4:3. Peter affirms this when he says: "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:12, 13. So the fire shall sometime cease to burn, and then God will create from the ashes of the old earth a new earth to be the abode of his people forever. And this is Solomon's doctrine also when he says: "The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner." Prov. 11:31. John represents the creation of the new earth as an event that succeeds the lake of fire. Rev. 20:14, 15; 21:1. It is certain, therefore, that the fire in which the wicked are to be punished will not burn to all eternity.

5. But is it certain that God will again have a clean universe, and none but holy beings remain alive? He certainly had such once, for evil had no existence till Satan originated it. The psalmist prays: "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more." Ps. 104:35. This prayer will most assuredly be answered, as the texts above quoted testify. When Balaam predicted the advent of Christ and the destruction of the wicked, he cried out, "Alas, who shall live when God doeth this!" Num. 24:17-24. And John tells us that "whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire," and "this is the second death." Rev. 20:14, 15. He also sets forth the time when none but holy beings exist in the universe of God.

Thus he says: "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying. Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Rev. 5:13. When these words shall have their fulfillment, the lake of fire will have done its work upon the wicked, and none but holy beings will remain alive. God is then all in all. And this time shall assuredly arrive; for God has spoken it.—*J. N. Andrews.*

Temperance Outlook.

WHY DO YE SUCH THINGS?

"WHEREFORE do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isa. 55:2. It is true that in the direct connection in which this scripture is used, the subject of bodily ailment is not the one under consideration, but it is used as a figure in the great invitation to the gospel board spread with the bounties of God's grace. Nevertheless, the importance of the questions here asked is none the less, in a material sense, but is the rather increased; because if the prophet of God, in inviting men to the provisions of God's house, could find a fit simile only in these things, it shows, as nothing else could, the immense importance of the things themselves.

That this view is just is proved by the fact that God gave to his people explicit directions regarding what they might eat and what they might not eat; and even in the gospel times he gave by Inspiration the express "wish" that his people might "prosper and be in health," even as their souls should prosper. And there is nothing more certain than that if men will eat that which is good, and drink and breathe also that which is good, they will prosper and be in health. And more than that, the soul of such a one will prosper better than where the conditions are otherwise. We do not say that to eat and drink and breathe what is good will make a person a Christian, but we do say that the person who does it can be a better Christian than he can if he does not do it. It is evident, on the mere statement of the case, that the person whose vital forces are all properly performing their special functions, being properly supplied with the right materials,—that such a person is better, and can be better in every way, than he could otherwise be.

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?" "Bread" is here used for food in general. Why, then, do you spend money for hashish, opium, tobacco, alcohol, beer, coffee, or tea? None of these things are food. The tendency of them, one and all, is only to impair the vital functions. Some may think that we have gone too far in including tea and coffee in this list, along with beer, alcohol, tobacco, opium, and hashish. But such is not the case; in that list is exactly the place where they belong, as we see from the following extract:—

"From tea to hashish we have, through hops, alcohol, tobacco, and opium, a sort of graduated scale of intoxicants, which stimulate in small doses and narcotize in larger."—*Encyclopedia Britannica*, art. Drunkenness.

These things, therefore, each being both stimulant and narcotic, can have none but an injurious effect upon the system when habitually used. We repeat: Their only effect is to impair the vital functions. And to do anything which impairs the vital functions, is to strike at the life (for our word "vital" comes from the Latin word "*vita*," which means *life*). All this will be readily enough agreed to regarding hashish, opium, and alcohol, and in fact it will be agreed to respecting the other things named, except by those who use them. For a person to use a thing and like it, even though he may have used it for years without any injury apparent to himself, is no proof that it is not an injury to him. The person who is practicing an evil is not always the one who is best qualified to decide the question whether or not he is being injured by it. Many a person who uses whisky, yet who never was drunk, will say, "Whisky does not hurt me;" while every one else knows that it does hurt him. Thousands of men who are addicted to the use of tobacco will say, "Tobacco does not hurt me;" while every one but the tobacco-user knows that it does hurt him, and that its *only* effect is that of injury. It is so with all the elements in the list we

have given; but we do not by any means intend it to be understood that all the things named in that list are equally injurious. Tea is not as injurious in its effects upon the system as opium, tobacco, or alcohol; but its effects are of the same kind, though less in degree. Tea is the lowest in the list, but the whole list, from tea to hashish, forms only "a graduated scale of intoxicants," and "the physiological action of all these agents gradually shades into one another," so that it is impossible to tell where the effect of any one in the list ceases, and where that of the next begins.

It matters not how poisonous or injurious to the vital organs a thing may be, if it can be taken in any perceptible quantity at all without causing death, the repeated use of that thing will create an appetite that can be satisfied with nothing else, while every time the thing is taken the appetite is increased, until at last, in the use of the most poisonous, the terrible habit will absorb the whole being, and bring its victim to a horrible death. This is well known in cases of those suffering from delirium tremens, opium or arsenic eating, etc. The principle of this is shown in the following definition of "vitality," by Baron Leibig:—

"Vitality is the power which each organ possesses of constantly reproducing itself. For this it requires a supply of substances which contain the constituent elements of its own substance, and are capable of transformation. When the quantity of food is too great, or is not capable of such transformation, or exerts any peculiar chemical action, the organ itself is subjected to a change."

The organ may at first raise the whole system in rebellion against that which is given it, as in the first chew of tobacco or the first cigar; but if the wicked stuff be pressed upon it again and again, the organ is forced to undergo a change, and adapts itself to the persistent demands that are made upon it, and becomes perverted, so that the thing against which at first it utterly rebelled, it now *must* have, and not only that, but will have nothing else. This is the secret of the formation of all the evil habits which are known to the human race. "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Every organ and every function of the human system, God made for good, and only good can come from their proper use. On the other hand, it is safe to say that there is hardly an organ or a function that has not been perverted by the abuse that has been heaped upon it by men, and the result is seen in the mass of misery that fills the world to-day.

Yet from all this Christ will redeem us and save us if we will but yield ourselves, both soul and body, to his gracious control. In closing this article, we can do no better than again to read the text in both its physical and its spiritual meaning: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? . . . Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."—*Pacific Health Journal.*

ALCOHOL.

BELLOWS says: "Alcohol contains no power of sustaining human life, but, on the other hand, produces in the system 'evil and only evil, and that continually.'"

He quotes from Professor Carpenter's Physiology, published in 1860, these words: "It may be safely affirmed that alcohol cannot answer any one purpose for which the use of water is required in the human system, but, on the other hand, it tends to antagonize many of those purposes."

"Alcohol liquids cannot supply anything which is essential to the due nutrition of the system."

"The action of alcohol upon the living body is essentially that of a stimulus, increasing, for a time, the vital activity of the body, but being followed by a corresponding depression of power, which is more prolonged and severe in proportion as the previous excitement has been greater."

Bellows also says: "All agree that alcohol is a stimulus which, literally, means a *goad*, a *whip*. When a horse gets stuck with a load too heavy for him, we use the goad or whip to excite the muscles to take the load up the hill. But when once up, the careful driver will be sure that next time the load shall be lighter, or the horse made stronger with oats. What should we say to the teamster who persisted in the opinion that the whip afforded nourishment to the horse because he could be made to draw a heavier load by whipping, and therefore persisted in whipping him more severely as his strength became exhausted? But if this is not the position of those who

think that alcohol is nutritious, I cannot understand them."

He quotes Dr. Bell, in his \$200 prize essay, as follows:—

"1. The opinion so largely prevailing as to the effects of the use of alcoholic liquors, viz., that they have a marked influence in preventing the deposition of tubercle, is destitute of any foundation.

"2. On the contrary, their use predisposes to tubercular deposition.

"3. Where tubercle already exists, alcohol has no effect in modifying the course usually run by that substance.

"4. Neither does it mitigate the morbid effects of tubercle upon the system in any stage of the disease."

Carpenter's Physiology says the physiological objection to the habitual use of even quite small quantities of alcoholic drinks rests upon the following grounds: "They are universally admitted to possess a poisonous character." "They tend to produce a morbid condition of the body at large." "The capacity for enduring the extremes of heat or cold, or mental or bodily labor, is diminished rather than increased by their habitual employment."

Prof. Jacob Bigelow, in a lecture given in 1825, said: "Alcohol is highly stimulating, heating, and intoxicating, and its effects are so fascinating that, when once experienced, the danger is that the desire for them may be perpetuated."

Prof. Yeomans, of New York, says: "It has been demonstrated that alcoholic drinks prevent the natural changes going on in the blood, and obstruct the nutritive and reparative functions." In his paper on "Alcohol and the Constitution of Man," the same author says: "Chemical experiments have demonstrated that the action of alcohol on the digestive fluid is to destroy its active principle, the pepsin, thus confirming the observation of physiologists, that its use gives rise to the most serious disorders of the stomach, and the most malignant aberrations of the entire economy."

"It is evident that so far from being the conservator of health, alcohol is an active and powerful cause of disease, interfering as it does with the respiration, the circulation, and the nutrition; nor is any other result possible." "Nothing can be more certain than that it is a powerful antagonist of the digestive process." "It prevents the natural changes going on in the blood." "It impedes the liberation of carbonic acid, a deadly poison." "It obstructs the nutritive and reparative functions." "It produces disease of the liver." "It has a powerful affinity for the substance of the brain, being, indeed, essentially a brain poison."

Rev. W. Scoresby, before a committee of the House of Commons, testified as follows: "My experience has been in severely cold climates, and there it is observable that there is a very pernicious effect in the reaction after the use of ardent spirits. I did not use them myself, and I was better, I conceive, without the use of them. I am well assured that such beverages as milk and water are in every way superior, both for comfort and health, for persons exposed to the weather or other severity. Spirits are decidedly injurious in cold climates. The men who have been assisted by such stimulants have been the first who were rendered incapable of duty. They became perfectly stupid, skulked into different parts of the ship to get out of the way, and were generally found asleep. In case of a storm, or other sudden difficulty, I should most decidedly prefer the water-drinkers to those who were under the influence of any stimulant."

Dr. Rush says, in his *Medical Enquirer*, "There cannot be a greater error than to suppose that spirituous liquors lessen the effects of cold on the body. On the contrary, they always render the body more liable to be affected and injured by cold. The temporary warmth they produce is always succeeded by chilliness."

Backus says: "In the winter of 1796, a vessel was wrecked on an island off the coast of Massachusetts. There were seven persons on board. Five of them resolved to quit the ship during the night, and seek shelter on the shore. To prepare for the attempt, four of them drank a quantity of spirits, and the fifth drank none. They all leaped into the water; one was drowned before reaching the shore; the other four came to land, and, in deep snow and piercing cold, directed their course to a distant light. All that drank spirits failed and stopped and froze, one after another; the man that drank none reached the house, and about two years ago was still alive."

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., January 15, 1888.

With this issue is completed the articles from Eld. Butler on "The True Israel." Those of our readers who have preserved their papers will be profited and interested by re-reading the articles in order. Many people entertain erroneous ideas regarding the "Israel" of God.

The concluding article of the series on "God's Covenants with Men" will be found in this issue. We believe that those who read it carefully will admit that the relation of the law and the covenant of the old dispensation to the law and the covenant of the new, is made very clear and conclusive.

Attention is called to the notice elsewhere of the Seventh-day Adventist Year Book for 1888. The price being exceedingly low,—only ten cents,—and the book containing such a large amount of useful and interesting information, we feel free to urge our readers to secure a copy at an early date.

We are apt to think that ours is a country quite free from idolatry; but if the reader will carefully peruse the article entitled "The Dangers of Idolatry," he may be led to conclude that there is more danger in this direction than he at first supposed. The fact is, we are all liable to be affected by idolatry, and need to give the matter very careful thought.

The apostle Paul exhorted the Galatians thus: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." We would emphasize this exhortation by suggesting that it may be complied with in extending the circulation of the GOSPEL SICKLE. The SICKLE is exclusively devoted to the promulgation of Bible teaching and Bible doctrine, in its purity and simplicity. The sole aim of the publishers is to glorify God and do good to their fellow-beings, and from this standpoint we do not shrink from asking all who are like minded to aid us in our efforts. This paper, dear reader, is an instrument placed in your hands by which you may labor for the spread of the gospel plan of salvation. Will you so use it?

A correspondent asks this question:—"Did Adam and Eve possess immortality before their fall?"

Answer.—In one sense, yes; in another, no. "Mortal" means "subject to death;" but to this they were not subject so long as they refrained from sin, and thus perpetuated their access to the tree of life. In this sense they were not mortal; and as immortal means not mortal, in this sense they were immortal. But immortal is also defined to mean "exempt from liability to die;" and this exemption they did not possess; for they were liable to sin, and did sin, and thereby incurred death. In this sense they were mortal. The reader may, perhaps, more readily comprehend their condition, if he will consider what his own would be, should he, in his present state, be granted access to the tree of life, and be told that as long as he, through obedience, maintained that relation and partook of that tree, he would live; but if he sinned, which it was possible for him to do, he would be denied longer access to the tree, and death would follow. Under these circumstances, reader, which would you be: mortal or immortal?

The reader will no doubt be interested in the table of statistics given elsewhere, relative to the numerical standing of Seventh-day Adventists. It should be stated that the statistics of membership embrace only those who are enrolled upon the church records. As a matter of fact, there are thousands of scattered believers who have not as yet been organized into churches. It is safe to estimate the number of such as sufficient to swell the total to upwards of 35,000 believers. It is within the memory of the writer when there were not one hundred Seventh-day Adventists in the world. It is interesting to note the spread of the religious faith peculiar to this denomination; and when we reflect upon its general unpopularity with the masses, (in consequence of its purely distinctive features,) and the strong, and we might say bitter, opposition it has had to contend with; and when we further reflect upon its feeble beginning respecting means for its advancement, its progress borders on the phenomenal.

In the column headed "Tithes Received during the Year," is included only the amounts contributed through that particular channel. Seventh-day Adventists make a distinction between "tithes" and "free-will offerings;" by the former they understand is meant the just and honorable financial obligation of Christians to support the gospel; a debt that is actually due, and that cannot be withheld without robbing God. By the latter they understand is meant such additional contributions to missionary enterprises, charitable and humane purposes, etc., as people choose to make. The "free-will offerings" made by Seventh-day Adventists very largely exceed the "tithes" paid by them. The "tithes" are applied exclusively to the compensation of ministers of the gospel; the "free-will offerings," to the furtherance of various home and foreign missionary enterprises.

HOW MANY SUNDAY MEETINGS ARE MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE?

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS have repeatedly asked the advocates of Sunday sacredness to produce evidence on the following points:—

1. That the disciples of Christ ever had a religious meeting in the day-time of the first day of the week.
2. That the disciples ever had more than one meeting, even, in the evening of the first day of the week.

A correspondent in New Jersey thinks she finds texts to prove more than one evening meeting on the first day of the week, and in addition to Acts 20:7, refers to 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."

Was this a religious meeting? Had the disciples assembled on this occasion for religious worship? This is the point to be decided. What was the occasion of the disciples' assembling at this time? Was it for fear of the Jews? Then certainly it could not have been a meeting for religious worship. The Lord had a little before been crucified, and the disciples were in fear for their own lives. This was natural. But it is incredible to suppose that that fear would lead them to do the very things which had so excited the malice of the Jews. They might, perhaps, hold a religious meeting in spite of fear of persecution, but hardly because of it. They would very probably shut their doors on account of their fear, as John records.

We then come back to the question: What was the occasion of their assembling? Mark and Luke tell us plainly. In Mark 16:14 we have a record of the same meeting, and he says that it was as they sat at meat, or were partaking of their evening meal. And Luke (Acts 1:13) further explains by telling us that they had one common abode, and so would of course be together at the time of meals.

The facts, then, are simply these: The disciples had lost their Master by the fearful scenes of the crucifixion a short time before. They felt their own lives to be in peril; and had shut themselves in the upper room where they had one common abode, having bolted the doors for fear their enemies would seek them out to slay them. And they were there together partaking of their evening meal, when the Lord appeared in their midst. It was not a religious meeting at all. Acts 20:7 still stands as the only record we have of a religious meeting on the first day of the week, and that only as an evening meeting. U. S.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST YEAR BOOK FOR 1888.

This is by far the most comprehensive of any Year Book heretofore published, containing both a conference and a complete alphabetical list of all ministers and licentiates laboring in the interests of the denomination, and a general directory of officers of the General Conference, General Conference Association, European Missionary Council, European Mission Board, International T. and M. Society, International Sabbath-school Association, Central and Pacific Publishing Associations, Battle Creek and Healdsburg Colleges, South Lancaster Academy, H. and T. Association, and Rural Health Retreat, all foreign and State conferences, T. and M. societies, S. S. associations, Health and Temperance organizations, etc., with full reports of the proceedings of their last annual sessions.

Under the heading, "Progress of the Work during 1887," are given interesting historical sketches of our publishing houses, colleges, the Sanitarium,

and city and foreign missions, showing what has been accomplished in Switzerland, Germany, Russia, France, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, South America, etc., etc.

The book contains the Constitution and By-laws of the General Conference Association, the act under which it has been reorganized, and a full explanation of its purposes, together with instruction as to the course individuals should pursue who wish to transact business with the Association.

Some changes having been made recently in the postal laws, these are presented, with hints regarding correspondence with publishers, Tract societies, etc., and the sending of money through the mails.

Valuable tabular reports are given, showing the yearly summary of labor performed by all classes of workers in the denomination, throughout the entire field; also a useful table which gives (in four latitudes) the exact sunset time for every Friday and Saturday in the coming year.

Such, in brief, is the Seventh-day Adventist Year Book for 1888, containing matter of the greatest importance to those who desire to see the cause of truth advance. It contains much more than last year; but in order that all may obtain it, the price remains only ten cents, postage paid. There will be considerable loss at these figures; but this is to be shared by several of our leading institutions, as recommended by the General Conference. The book will be found to be interesting and valuable to the general reader.

Address
Review and Herald,
Battle Creek, Mich.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST STATISTICS.—1888.

In the columns for Ministers and Licentiates is given the actual number expected to labor in each Conference during the coming year, according to the recommendations of the General Conference, and not the number receiving credentials or licenses, as heretofore.

NAMES OF CONFERENCES.	PRESENT NUMERICAL STANDING.				
	Ministers.	Licentiates.	Churches.	Members.	Tithes rec'd during the year.
1. California.....	17	11	31	1,900	\$80,831.76
2. Canada.....	2	..	5	137	471.00
3. Colorado.....	4	3	8	229	4,310.28
4. Dakota.....	4	3	20	632	6,261.88
5. Denmark.....	4	2	9	220	100.00
6. Illinois.....	6	5	26	783	8,404.59
7. Indiana.....	9	4	51	1,121	6,770.51
8. Iowa.....	12	7	76	1,756	11,981.50
9. Kansas.....	9	22	57	2,000	11,762.74
10. Kentucky.....	2	1	8	125	1,460.66
11. Maine.....	4	4	20	436	2,640.61
12. Michigan.....	30	23	119	4,355	30,813.97
13. Minnesota.....	13	14	64	1,689	12,352.04
14. Missouri.....	7	4	20	862	4,833.19
15. Nebraska.....	9	7	39	700	4,900.40
16. New England..	3	5	26	720	8,252.05
17. New York.....	9	4	30	810	6,492.82
18. North Pacific..	2	6	16	370	3,737.98
19. Norway.....	3	1	4	205	10.00
20. Ohio.....	7	7	47	1,173	7,650.16
21. Pennsylvania..	5	2	38	780	5,584.93
22. Switzerland...	8	10	19	402	2,596.62
23. Sweden.....	3	..	10	238	110.00
24. Tennessee.....	3	1	6	162	1,141.09
25. Texas.....	1	6	12	390	2,100.00
26. Upper Columbia	5	3	9	290	2,404.47
27. Vermont.....	4	7	17	452	2,300.00
28. Virginia.....	5	2	5	118	412.14
29. West Virginia.	2	..	2	92	346.72
30. Wisconsin.....	11	7	54	1,665	9,209.90
MISSIONS.					
Australian.....	3	2	4	180	1,647.00
British.....	5	1	5	115	625.00
Central American..	..	..	..	5	.....
General Southern..	13	5	13	400	1,000.00
New Zealand.....	1	1	2	89	.....
Other Pacific Isl'ds.	..	2	2	130	.....
South African....	2	..	1	26	.....
South American...	..	..	..	25	15.48
30 Total.....	227	182	889	25,341	\$192,720.99
28 Given last year	213	166	798	23,111	146,936.78
2 Gain.....	14	16	91	2,730	\$45,784.21

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