

EXTRA.

THE HOME MISSIONARY

Arise, Shine; for
Thy Light is Come, and the Glory of the Lord is Risen upon Thee

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., U. S. A., DECEMBER, 1894.

WEEK OF PRAYER READINGS.

THE PROGRESS OF THE MESSAGE, AND THE NECESSITY OF ORGANIZED
AND WELL DIRECTED EFFORTS.

Reading for Sabbath, December 22.

ANOTHER year of progress for our message and of work in connection therewith is in the past; and it is thought best, as heretofore, to set apart at this season a time for special prayer and devotion. It becomes us as a people anew to express our gratitude to God for blessings received, anew to seek him for increased power and grace, and anew to consecrate ourselves and all we have to his service.

Many reasons might be given for so doing, but they are apparent. The benefits and blessings received during the past season, and the present situation of affairs, fully demonstrate the propriety of such a course.

We earnestly desire and pray that the present week of prayer will be the most profitable, the most deeply fraught with blessing of any that we have ever had.

The past year has witnessed a marked development in the work of the message. As the years go by, the hand of God in our work is more and more clearly seen. The evidences of the near approach of the final consummation daily become more striking. Never before have we seen such evidences of the Spirit of God moving upon the hearts of individuals in different parts of the world. Everywhere people are found whose hearts are deeply stirred

with an earnest desire to know the truth for our times, and nothing seems to satisfy them until they obtain a knowledge of the third angel's message. By this we do not say that everybody is pressing into the kingdom of heaven, and that obstacles and opposition to our work are all disappearing; on the contrary, these are developing with increased number and strength. But we expect this will be so, and it need not dishearten us. We have the abounding grace of God in which to trust; and in the evidences of his opening providence going before us, and the Macedonian cries that reach us from every land, we have the assurance that he is at work.

In Europe, at every point and in every feature, the work is onward. Ministers, Bible workers, and colporters are all meeting with success. The publishing work in London and Christiania is prosperous. Our publishing house in Switzerland, while generally prosperous, has met with some difficulties on account of Sunday labor. Several fines have been imposed, the last case having been appealed from one court to another of higher order until the Supreme Court was reached. Its decision having been also adversely decided, an opportunity is now given of carrying our case to the legislative body. This has made a favorable opportunity to bring the

principles of the truth before the people generally, and also before those high in authority. As a result, there is not only a general awakening among our own people, but many in other circles, both higher and lower, are earnestly inquiring for the way of truth. In all this we rejoice, for it serves to advance the work of God, and contributes to the furtherance of the gospel. And if it comes to imprisonment, even this the Lord will doubtless turn to his own glory.

In Southern Europe, during the past year, our publications have been translated into and published in several languages in which we have not heretofore had any literature. Continually we are learning of people embracing the Sabbath under circumstances of great interest. As far as I am informed, there is not a nation in Europe that does not contain some witnesses for the truth.

In Russia the work presents many encouraging features in spite of formidable difficulties. Interests are springing up in very many places. Of late some of our colporters have obtained government recognition and permission for their work. This is a remarkable concession in that country, and furnishes another evidence of the divine hand that is guiding our work.

The *Review* has also given us full and interesting accounts of the progress of the work in Turkish dominions and other places in the Orient. With what pleasure and gratitude we note that the last message to the world has now traveled over the same ground where the first apostles labored and had their experiences! A small church has been organized in Constantinople, and in other places in Asiatic Turkey companies of believers are being raised up.

In other portions of the world the same success attends the work. In Australia while there is suffering from financial catastrophe which has overtaken them, our laborers have been greatly blessed, and success has crowned every effort put forth.

During the year our missionary ship has returned from her second cruise with a most interesting report of successful missionary work. After remaining a short time in port, she again went forth with a full load of laborers and supplies, which are now being distributed in the islands which are already waiting for God's law. In Africa, too, the way is opening for this "gospel of the kingdom" to be carried to its benighted people. Did space permit, it would be of interest to give more full details of the work in all the older fields, and to speak at length of the work in the West Indies, in Mexico, in

Central South America; but it would be to repeat largely what has already been said of other places, for the same progress characterizes the work, and the same interest to hear and learn exists in all these countries. And as we look abroad throughout the world, we exclaim in the language of our blessed Lord and Master: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to the harvest." But our people who have followed carefully the reports that have appeared, are more or less familiar with these facts.

For a moment we turn to the outlook in the United States. In the country at large the financial depression and consequent stagnation of business, have been severely felt. In connection with this have been the great strikes, a protracted drought that has destroyed the crops in many States, and forest fires that have devoured much property and many lives. All these things have had their effect upon the people, upon the general situation, and upon our work. One can hardly fail to see that the retributive judgments of God are abroad in the land. During this time the spirit of persecution has increased in this country as well as in other parts of the world. The arrest of several of our brethren for keeping the Sabbath of the Lord and working on the first day of the week, in this country, in Australia, and in Europe, with divers instances of lawless violence in Maryland, show how rapidly the prophecies are fulfilling, and are premonitory of the time of trouble that is just before us.

Is it not time to awake, and shake off our lethargy, and put on the strength with which the Lord is waiting to gird his people? All these things declare plainly that we are living in the very closing scenes of this world's history. But much remains to be done. The third angel's message has not yet accomplished its work. Men and means are needed now as never before. Time is very short; therefore whatever is done must be quickly done. I would that we might sense these things as we ought. May God help us so to do! Men and women are needed who have consecrated their all to Christ. Individuals of deep Christian experience with large hearts full of the love of God, are needed; those who are willing to suffer and endure hardship as good soldiers without murmur or complaint. The character of the work to be done calls for those of education and training for any kind of work that the circumstances may call for. People are needed who can readily adapt themselves to any situation in which Providence may place them. It is impossible for us to

overestimate the weight of responsibility resting upon us in view of our connection with the closing work of God upon the earth. Nor can we estimate the evil that would result from our unfaithfulness in so great a trust. In view of this the most complete consecration is called for on the part of every worker.

There is also a great need of means for carrying forward the work. We have already sent a number of laborers to "regions beyond;" but what we have done is but a beginning, and while we have reason for gratitude to God for what has been accomplished and what is being done, still it is evident to every thoughtful believer that our work is yet in its smaller stages, and that what has been done is but little in comparison with that which remains to be accomplished. The whole earth is to be lighted with the glory of the angel that represents our message. This is no time to falter or fail in the work. We may meet difficulties and obstacles, but we are to go forward with courage, doing the work that God has entrusted to us. Our final triumph is sure if we but prove faithful to him that has called us.

Our time to labor having become so short, every opportunity should be improved with diligence. We must press on without delay to those parts of the earth that have not as yet been entered by the messenger of truth, for the work is to be cut short in righteousness. We find ourselves in that time which we have for years been anticipating,—the loud cry of the third angel's message. We have in the past enjoyed much of God's blessing, but in the year before us we shall need a much deeper work of divine grace. We as laborers need more power with God and with men. As a people we must seek a more thorough consecration to God, and a more perfect insensibility to the world and its charms. We need to labor less for selfish gratification, and to learn to sacrifice for God and for souls. Upon this point we cannot do better than to quote from a late letter from Sr. White, directed to our people in America.

"Brethren and sisters in America, I make an appeal to you. 'God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' The lives of many are too delicate and dainty; they know nothing of bearing hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They themselves are obstructions in the way of soul-saving. They have many wants, everything must be convenient, and easy, and nice to suit their taste; they themselves will not move, and those who would move they hinder by their suppositions and imaginary wants and their love of idols. They think themselves Christians, but do not know what the practical Christian life signifies. What is the definition of Christian? It is to be Christ-like. 'He who will come after me,' says Jesus, 'let him deny himself, and take

up his cross daily, and follow me.' When the Lord sees his people hindering their imaginary wants, practicing self-denial, not in a mournful, regretful spirit, as Lot's wife left Sodom, but joyfully, for Christ's sake, and because it is the right thing to do, then the work will go forward with power. Let nothing, however dear, however loved, absorb your mind and affections, diverting you from the searching of the Scriptures, or from most earnest prayer. Watch unto prayer, live your own requests, co-operate with God by working in harmony with him, expel everything from the soul temple which assumes the form of an idol. Now is God's time, and his time is your time. Fight the good fight of faith, refuse to think unbelief, or to talk unbelief. There is a world to hear the last warning of mercy."

We are entering trying times. Many will be led away by false teachings. Some will take extreme positions, and place fanciful or speculative interpretations on scripture, and with great apparent zeal will put forth efforts that will not bear the fruits of the Spirit of God. The time has now come when each individual must be settled and grounded in Christ. Many voices will be heard crying, Lo here! and, Lo there! but we are to know the voice of the true Shepherd, and to follow him. O that we might see that thorough work that the times call for! Would to God that we might see his servants and people everywhere clothed with that divine power that is to attend the message in its closing work!

Now a few words in reference to the contributions for missionary work in other lands. Circumstances in the United States are not as favorable for contributing as they have been in other years, but for all this we are looking for larger contributions this year than at any former offering; because (1) the cause of God needs it. We cannot do justice to the work we have in hand and the calls that are coming in, unless our contributions are largely increased over those of last year. (2) We believe that our people are beginning to appreciate more fully the shortness of time and the importance of immediate and earnest work.

We have many evidences from scripture and in our own experiences that go to show that our ability to do is not so dependent on favorable outward surroundings as upon our faith in God and devotion to his work. We often refer to the scripture which says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." It is our privilege to go forward and trust in God. We are now on the very borders of the promised land. There is a conflict before us; but relying on the power of God we are fully able to go up and possess the land.

In a late letter, Sr. White uses this expression:

"We are in the very shadow of the time of trouble which is fast approaching, a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." This, then, is no time to look backward, nor to place our affection on earth, nor to bury our interest in the things of the world. Brethren and sisters, be aroused to a true sense of this time. And when we do, we shall certainly be aroused to earnest work, and no one will then need to be urged to contribute liberally to the work of the Lord. It will soon be too late to help in the work of saving souls. The time will surely come when those who have withheld from the cause the talents of money which they might have contributed, will grieve and lament over their lost opportunities. When it is too late,—when it can no longer be made

use of for the work, they will bring their money; but then it will only be possible for them to cry out in despair, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Now is our time to work; now means are needed for carrying forward the work; now the way is open; now the calls are urgent; and now is the time to place all upon the altar of God's service. In doing this your faith will be tried, your way may seem hedged up; but give faith a chance to work, and let the Lord have opportunity to help you. In a little from this the work will be done, the victory will be won, and we if faithful shall have part in the glorious triumph. We shall join the song of victory sung by the redeemed as they stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

O. A. OLSEN.

ZEAL IN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.

Reading for Sunday, December 23.

WE have reached a very important and interesting period in this world's history. The signs which mark the last generation on earth, are in the past. It is now half a century since the proclamation went forth, "Fear God, and give glory to him for the hour of his judgment is come." From the fall of man, the people of God, as well as nations, have at times reached crises in their history. At such times great blessings were offered to those who appreciated the situation, while others would be left in great darkness, which resulted in disaster and ruin to themselves. But in all such experiences there was a faint representation of the final crisis, when the destiny of the world would be in the balance, and of individuals as well. Such a time we have reached. The decision made in this crisis into which we are entering will be universal and final. At its close will be the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then all the righteous, whether among the living or among the dead, will be gathered to meet the great Life-giver in the air. But now we are in the valley of decision. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision."

At this time God calls for action. This is imperative. The nature of the case demands it. The prophet exclaims:—

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unright-

eous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Margin, "he will multiply pardon." Isa. 55: 6, 7.

God is honored when men recognize his voice and move because he speaks.

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light." John 12: 35, 36.

The Lord on account of their sins, sold Israel into the hands of a king in Canaan for twenty years. But the time came when he would deliver them. It was their time to rise and co-operate with the Lord; it was a crisis for them and for the individuals which composed the nation. A portion of the people of God appreciated this. "In the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field." But all availed themselves of the opportunity presented. "Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore." "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." It was a terrible thing to be thus cursed of the Lord. In this experience we have an intimation of the end of the

history of this world; for the conclusion of the song was, "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." Judges 5. Here was a time for action. It was a special time for Israel. They were not simply to know that the time had come, but that they were to arise and come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. To do this acceptably it required great searching of heart. Such ones received the blessing of the Lord, while those who did not, received for themselves a curse.

Such are the times in which we live. "The time to favor Zion, yea the set time has come." The day is fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Even now we are beginning to see these things. Satan will be clothed with angel robes and deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many, for every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Every evil agency is now being stirred as never before to hasten the final contest between truth and error. Satan is taking possession of every earthly power. Already the contest has begun. The time is not far distant when the test will come to each soul. The mark of the beast is being urged upon us. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of the beast. Some of our brethren are now lying in prison; others are being arrested and brought before magistrates, where they testify to the truth as it is in Jesus. Bonds, imprisonments, confiscation of goods, and banishment after being scourged with rods, are now being experienced by some who keep God's commandments, and for no other crime but doing this. And who are those who complain of our brethren?—They are those who profess to be the children of God. Those whose names are upon the church books are the ones who urge the persecution that is being waged. Who cannot see in these things a fulfillment of Revelation 13? This was prophesied of eighteen hundred years ago, and now it cometh to pass, and this is but the beginning.

On the other hand, the Lord is marshaling his hosts. He is sending forth the last solemn warning. The Macedonian cry is coming from all directions. "Send us laborers," is the urgent appeal from the east, west, north, south, and from the islands of the sea. All around us, both at home and in foreign lands, the fields are white already to harvest. The most darkened lands upon the earth are calling for the light of the gospel. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life." Is it

not folly to turn from these fields and engage in a business that will yield only pecuniary gain? Is it not acting the traitor, and betraying sacred trusts, to sit idly by with folded hands in a time like this? Christ wants workers, unselfish workers,—not those who are seeking for the highest wages, but those whose own lives are not dear unto them if they can but engage in some way in the service of their Master. He calls for those who are willing to become poor for his sake. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. 8:9.

What were the inducements offered by this world that led Christ to leave heaven and come down to this earth all marred with sin?—Insults, mockery, poverty, shame, rejection, betrayal, and crucifixion; but in the world to come, the joy of seeing souls redeemed in the kingdom of glory, by his humiliation. Shall the under shepherds seek for an easier lot than that of their Master? We should never forget we have been redeemed by *suffering*. It is the precious blood of Christ that makes atonement for us. What has been the actuating motive of those who have given the glorious light of the gospel to the people from time to time? Has it not been love for God and his cause? Have they not had a zeal that caused them to bear hardships without a murmur? And was it not a joy for them to sacrifice every earthly good for their dear Redeemer? "God forbid," says the great apostle to the Gentiles, "that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Gal. 6:14. It is by toil, sacrifice, and peril, by losses of worldly goods, and in agony of soul, that the gospel has been borne to the world.

God now calls for young men in the strength and vigor of their youth; he calls for middle-aged men and women in the strength of manhood and womanhood to share with him in self-denial and suffering. He calls for old men and women also to support these laborers, by their prayers and means as they go into the field, and thus with united effort send forth the gospel to earth's remotest bounds. Will men and women accept this call under these circumstances and conditions? But the Lord would have every one first count the cost; so that when the work is entered upon, there may be a full understanding that service is to be rendered to a crucified Redeemer. Look at the history of the apostles, who suffered poverty, disgrace, abuse, and even death, for the truth's sake. They rejoiced that they were accounted

worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. God will accept no lower standard of zeal in these days than in those of the early church. Are we prepared to drink the cup? Can we be baptized with the baptism that Christ was baptized with? Who would prefer to be crucified head downward, as was Peter because he was unworthy to die as his Lord? The time has fully come when there should be a holy zeal for God equal to that in the days of the apostles.

In the beginning of every religious reform there has been commendable zeal by those whom God used to carry forward his work. The early days of the Reformation testified to this. Those whom God chose to lead out in the third angel's message set an example which is worthy of consideration. At the beginning of the gospel under the influence of the early rain, "they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need." Acts 2:45. Barnabas, also of the country of Cyprus, "having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet." Acts 4:36, 37. He then gave himself to the preaching of the word, and for at least twenty-five years he labored and supported himself by his own hands, as did the apostle Paul. 1 Cor. 9:6. Satan was aroused at such zeal and consecration to the work of God. It took souls from under the black banner, and brought them under the banner of Prince Immanuel. And as the early workers thus went forth, persecutions arose upon every hand. But "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all." They were arrested and brought before the council, convicted, scourged, and imprisoned, but "the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth, and said, Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." They bore their testimony to the truth and declared, "We are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them." "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." The third and fourth chapters of Acts should be read with interest, as they present the zeal and consecration of the early church, and their effect both upon the people and upon themselves. God was honored, and he trusted them with great power

to heal the sick, and to witness for him, confirming their words with signs and wonders.

But a change came over the church. Their numbers increased, and many arose who were unacquainted with those whom the Saviour had chosen to lead out in the gospel. They had left their first love; their early zeal had begun to wane. And thirty years later the Spirit of God dictated to the church as follows: "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath a great recompense of reward." He then proceeds to apply this experience in the last days, as follows: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Heb. 10:32-39. The language implies that during this reviving of the spirit of consecration and zeal, we must move by faith. We cannot move by feeling or by others' light. It is the instruction from the Spirit of God as to the time in which we live, that should stir our souls. It was so with the disciples. Six years after these statements of the apostle Paul were written, the Roman army surrounded Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and took captive those found therein. The disciples had received a warning from the Saviour giving the time to flee. Had they waited until Jerusalem was surrounded with armies before making arrangements for leaving their homes and engaging in the work of God, they would have had no time for making proper preparations for doing so. Their faith was based on the teachings of the Saviour relating to their position and work. It must be so with us. The apostle connects their work with ours. Their experience is our experience.

In the beginning of our work of Sabbath reform the pioneers possessed zeal and consecration. They supported themselves by their own hands. The tithing system was not followed for the support of the ministry. They suffered hardships. A sprink-

ling of persecution came upon them. But the power of God and the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost was theirs to enjoy. Many embraced the faith. Order was established. The great battle of organization was fought and the victory won. But ere long the early zeal began to wane. At present there are but few who appreciate the deprivations of our early laborers, and the holy zeal that actuated them in their efforts. Many of those who have, in later years, connected themselves with the work are unacquainted with the trials endured by the pioneers in our cause. But little is at present known of the agony of soul endured to bring about the advantages that are now connected with the prosecution of the work. As a result a spirit of formality has come in. But will the work thus close? Are there none who will lay themselves and their possessions upon the altar of present truth, and go forth as did our early laborers, to proclaim the second coming of Christ? There needs now to be manifested by us a revival of the spirit of our pioneers.

The preaching of the gospel is God's chosen agency for the salvation of souls. But our first work is to bring our hearts into harmony with God, if we would be prepared to labor for others. In the early days of the message there was great searching of heart among the consecrated workers. They often sought the Lord earnestly upon their knees, with their open Bibles before them; and as rays of light would break into their minds, they would, with thanksgiving and praise on their lips, rejoice in the God of their salvation. They counseled together, and united in humble, fervent prayer for divine guidance. But there has been a decline of this commendable spirit and of missionary zeal. Yet the coming of Christ hasteneth greatly. Would there were more intercession with God, more earnestness in his service, greater humility, greater purity, and greater faith.

The seeds of truth that are being sown by missionary effort, will spring up, blossom, and bear fruit. If we as individuals do not arise and are not actuated with more zeal, the candlestick will be removed out of its place, and we shall not have the privilege of engaging in the work in its closing stages, and so be numbered with those of whom it is said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." God will work a work in our day which but few of us anticipate. He will raise up and exalt those who are taught by the unction of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the educator of his people. The Bible is in our hands and houses. Let us search it as for hidden treasures.

The time has fully come when there should be an awakening in missionary zeal. Our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The time has come when zeal should permeate our very lives. As ministers and people we should weep between the porch and the altar, and cry, "Spare thy people, O Lord." We would not urge any extreme movement, or excitement, but we bespeak for the work a holy, sensible effort that will continue day and night until the King comes in his beauty. There was never a time since the fall of man when there was demanded more lasting, untiring zeal in the cause of God than the present.

All things indicate that the Lord is soon coming. Let us now prepare for the closing events of this world's history. It will be wise for the people of God who are engrossed with the cares of this life to sell and give alms while souls are crying for the truth. If we enter the cause of Christ with all of our energies, we shall find the Lord will receive us and lead us on to sure and certain victory. Who will do this as we enter upon 1895?

S. N. HASKELL.

THE GIFTS: THEIR PRESENCE AND OBJECT.

Reading for Monday, December 24.

THE "gifts" suggested are the gifts of the Spirit of God. And the subject of our study at this time is not the presence and object of one gift only, but the *Gifts: Their Presence and Object*.

We shall study first —

THE OBJECT OF THE GIFTS.

This is so plainly stated in the Scriptures that surely none need mistake it. In Eph. 4:7-15, we read: —

"Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists: and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

Here are several statements made as to the object of the gifts: —

1. The perfecting of the saints.
2. The edifying — the building up — of the body of Christ — the Church.
3. To create in the people of God such a steadiness and stability of heart and mind and character that they shall never be moved by any power that may ever be enlisted against them.

The chief of all these objects, that which might justly be termed *the object of the gifts*, seems to be "the edifying" — the building up — of the church. All the others seem to be contributory to this. Though "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal:" yet his profiting is to be used to the edifying of the church.

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, *that the church may receive edifying.*" 1 Cor. 14:4, 5.

"Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." Verse 12.

The propriety of praying or giving of thanks in an unknown tongue, is questioned because "the other is not edified." Verse 17.

"I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice *I might teach others also*, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Verses 18, 19.

"How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. *Let all things be done unto edifying.*" Verse 26.

From all this counsel it certainly would appear that the one great object of the gifts is to build up the church in Jesus Christ.

From this and other considerations it is plain also that the object of the gifts is not in any sense to satisfy curiosity, nor a desire for their display. For, although we are bidden to "desire spiritual gifts," to "covet prophesy," and to "covet earnestly the best gifts:" yet we are also cautioned that there is a more excellent way to obtain them; and a more excellent way to go, even without them, than to have them merely upon a desire for their manifestation.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

From this it is perfectly plain that the manifestation of all the gifts of the Spirit, if such a thing were possible, only in response to a desire for their bestowal, would do not one particle of good. As the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit, and as the manifestation of these gifts in response to only a desire for them, would "profit nothing," it is clear enough that our minds are not to be turned to a longing desire for the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit of God.

No, the one thing to which our most earnest attention is to be turned, and unto which our hearts shall aspire with the most intense longing, is charity, *charity*, CHARITY — the love of God, "the bond of perfectness." Without this all else is nothing. This

itself is the fulfilling of all the law and the prophets. And this all-important, this most to be desired thing is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us.

To seek such an endowment of the Spirit of God as will shed abroad in our hearts the love of God, that we shall love one another and all men with the love of Jesus Christ — *this* is the great thing to be desired, the chief thing to be coveted, the one thing to be sought after.

This brings all other good things in its train. It carries all things in itself. While though it were possible to have all other things without this, yet after all we would really have nothing, and we ourselves would be nothing.

Then turn away the mind from all things but following after charity. And desire spiritual gifts only as the consequence of the abundance of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and abounding in the life by the Holy Ghost. Let the seeking for this love of God absorb all the attention. Let the desire for this draw out the heart's deepest longings. Let this engage the most devoted consecration. Let all this be so until the promise shall be fulfilled to every soul: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." For "this spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive." John 7: 38, 39.

Though this is so plainly stated in the Bible, and though it is so easy to see and so reasonable, yet it is a fact that thousands of our people as well as multitudes of others, have allowed their attention and their desires, too, to be drawn away after manifestations of gifts in miracles and signs and wonders. Many of our own people have looked at the "holiness bands," the "faith healings," "Christian Science," etc., and have wondered why such things as were said to be done there, were not seen among us. And some have been drawn away by such things, to go with those bodies.

Many others have queried thus with themselves: "These things are promised to the people of God in the last days, and we are in the last days. These signs were to follow them that believe. Now if we are the people of God, why are not these things seen among us? Why don't these signs follow us as a people?" And they have thus queried themselves into a position where they are almost ready to doubt whether we have the truth.

It is true that these things are promised to the people of God. They belong with the people of God.

They belong among us. They are promised to us. These signs shall follow them that believe. They are to follow us. They ought to be following us now; for, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." John 14: 12.

Then why is it not so with us now? There is a reason for it. And that reason is, *the great lack of the love of God among us*. It is because of this very thing that we are now studying; namely, the desiring the manifestation of the gifts merely of themselves, without taking the more excellent way of earnestly desiring and diligently seeking the love of God to be shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, so that we shall love one another with the love of Christ. It is because of desiring the gifts, rather than desiring that charity — that love of God in the heart — which itself brings the gifts and all other of the good things of God. *This is the reason.*

Where would be the good of the gift of tongues to a person who uses the only tongue that he now has in backbiting, talebearing, and gossiping about his brethren and neighbors? Where would be the benefit of the gift of understanding all mysteries, to a people who neglect the most precious of all mysteries; namely, God manifest in the flesh, which is Christ *in you* the hope of glory; and which has been so fully and so clearly revealed to all that all are without excuse for not understanding? If Christ in the days of his flesh had acted this way, then how many of those wondrous works would have been wrought in him? how many of the gifts of the Spirit of God would then have been manifested through him?

No; these wondrous works were wrought in him because God dwelt in him by faith. The gifts of the Spirit were manifested through him because that Spirit dwelt in him and wrought in him *unhindered*. And this, too, while he in himself was just as weak as we are; while he was in fact just *ourselves* in the flesh — but trusting in God. For "*in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren,*" being tempted in all things "*like as we are.*" Heb. 2: 17; 4: 15. If we would find the works of Christ among us, then Christ himself must *be in us*. "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." 1 John 3: 24.

Thus again we are brought to view the absolute necessity of having the Holy Ghost to shed abroad the love of God in the heart, that abounding charity in the life, in order to find the manifestation of the gifts according to the mind of God and to our own

profit. O let all seek this with all the heart, and with a never slacking consecration, till he pour out to us in its abundance the latter rain.

"Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee. . . . And they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon this land." Zech. 9: 12, 15, 16.

This is not to say, however, that there has been *no* seeking of the Lord, nor *any* devotion or consecration. Not by any means. There has been; and therefore there have been precious seasons of refreshing. There has been improvement and advancement. Because, as there has been a seeking of the Lord and a measure of devotion, the Lord in his goodness has responded bountifully with light and blessing. And as is always the case with him, he has given far beyond the measure of our devotion and has bestowed even *his best gifts*. Yet because of the lack of a deeper consecration and more constant devotion, these gifts have not been appreciated and profited by. And the Lord could not give more while the best are not truly valued.

Therefore we can speak really and properly of—

THE PRESENCE OF THE "GIFTS,"

as well as of the object of them. There is not, it is true, the presence of *all* the gifts; and this for the reasons already given; but there has been, and there is, the presence of certain gifts — and these the best ones, or at least the first in order. For "God hath set some in the church: First, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers;" and "*after that miracles;*" and "*then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*"

An *apostle* is one sent by the Lord with a special message, or to do a certain work. It is not necessary that there should be *twelve*, nor yet any certain number of them. There were *more* than twelve in the first days of the church. And as these in succession passed away, there were fewer of course. *One* alone sent of the Lord to do a special work in his cause, is as much an apostle as though he were one of a dozen or more. Nor is it essential that in order to be an apostle, he shall be acknowledged to be an apostle and received as such by those to whom he is sent or in whose behalf he labors. Paul's apostleship was called in question almost everywhere he went, and was doubted by some who were prominent among the brethren, yet this in no wise proved that he was not an apostle. He was an apostle.

Whether men recognized it or not did not affect the fact. He was sent of Christ to fill a special place in his cause and work; and it is the commission of Christ that makes men apostles, or prophets, or teachers, and not the will or choice of men.

Nor is it necessary that there should be a direct succession of apostles all the way down to our day, in order that there should be such in our day. It is the message with which he is sent, and the work that is given him of God to do that constitutes one's apostleship, and not any particular succession in office. None of the offices or dignities of the church of Christ are derivable by succession. They come only by appointment from the Lord Jesus himself, the Head of the church.

Nor does it follow that because one is an apostle, it is impossible for him to make a mistake in conduct. Peter made a mistake at Antioch; and James made a mistake at Jerusalem, when he with others required Paul to compromise the faith; and Paul made a mistake when he yielded to their requirement. Acts 21: 18-28; "Sketches From the Life of Paul," pp. 211-214. Men whom even the Lord chooses and sends, may possibly make mistakes; but the blessed thing over all is the precious fact that Christ who is the Head of the church, and who lives in the church, will surely point out and correct their mistakes; and *Christ makes no mistakes*.

That the Lord has given to his cause in the third angel's message, such as these — men whom he has sent with a special message and to do a special work under Christ in giving mold and right direction to this cause — is evident to all. And these workers and their work, are to be honored as of the Lord.

"Every channel that God has used through which to communicate truth, is to be respected. God has appointed human agents whom he has made channels through which the waters of life have flowed down through the ages of the past to our times. God has made them the depositaries of sacred truth, and they have been co-laborers with Jesus Christ in diffusing the light and truth that has made the church what it is to-day. Let God alone specify the mistakes that they have made; but let us be silent concerning what we may think is a defection. We have enough to do to learn the lessons he would have us learn.

"Increased light has come to us from God as we have searched the living oracles. We have discovered gems that were more precious than gold and silver, and many of these rich treasures have been pointed out to us by men who are now laid away in the grave. Let us not depreciate one of God's workmen. If God in his great mercy has traced the imperfection of any of his workmen, it is for the purpose of leading the church to shun his defects, and to imitate his virtues. Let us cherish the truth which he has spoken to us, and the counsel that has been given to us by men through whom God manifested his will in a marked manner. Let us be

grateful that there were men who appropriated the grace of Christ, and bore the burden in the heat of the day, whose lips are now silent. The Lord Jesus bade John to write of them, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.' We should be careful how we handle the names of the precious and blessed ones who sleep in Jesus.

"It has been at very great cost that the truth has been brought before the people. The third angel's message was established through very great difficulties; for every conceivable obstruction was in the way of its proclamation at first. Those who have seen the truth at a later date, who have had no experimental knowledge as to what it cost to become a Seventh-day Adventist when all the believers could be numbered within a small compass, should be guarded in their expressions in regard to the men through whom the Lord wrought as pioneers in his work."

THE GIFT OF TEACHERS.

Teachers of his word and of his ways, as well as evangelists and pastors, it is also evident that God has given to his cause. Else what is the meaning of the system of ministers' institutes and Bible schools that has been established among us, from which men and women are to go forth to teach the word of God and his message in his way? and of which he has spoken these words:—

"The great advantages of the ministerial institutes are not half appreciated. They are rich in opportunities; but they do not accomplish half what they should, because those who attend them do not practice the truth which is presented before them in clear lines."

And this:—

"Anything, anything, but men who have had all the privileges of the ministerial institutes, and yet do not absorb the truth, and therefore *cannot give the truth to others.*"

And this also:—

"I was bidden to look and behold what continuous efforts had been put forth, and how precious time and money had been consumed in educating ministers in Bible truth and instructing them how to work; and yet how small a number had responded to the light that had been given, how few had been led to tremble at the word, and to arouse from their dormant, sluggish, spiritual state, to take in the fact that there is a world to be warned, and that there are souls who are perishing out of Christ.

"The sanction of Heaven cannot be given to misuse of light and truth or to spiritual inactivity. Of those who have not improved their privileges, it is written in the books of heaven: 'Thou wicked and slothful servant, . . . thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.' Those who have been privileged to have the truth brought before them, should, irrespective of circumstances, receive the truth into good and honest hearts, and go to work as faithful stewards of the grace of Christ.

"He who has heard the truth, who has realized that the light of Heaven has shone upon his soul, and who has not walked in the light, has *hid his talent in the earth.* . . . If the truth is received

in the heart, and valued as a heavenly gift, it will be a working element that will work from the heart, and its workings will be apparent in the outward life. The ministers who have had the privilege of attending ministerial institutes one upon another, and have not used the grand principles of truth set before them, not letting their light shine forth in steady rays to others, *will lose the light they already have*, because they have not diffused it to others."

"The Bible truths of justification and righteousness by faith have been set before large numbers of people. Some have been animated and delighted with the truth for a short time, but they have not appropriated the truth, and their minds and hearts are not purified from their sins. They do not cultivate an abiding faith, nor drink the rich and living draught placed to their lips, and they soon lose the impression made upon their hearts. Shall we not seek to arouse the sluggish sensibilities of those who know the truth, and impress upon them their duty to practice it themselves, *and teach it to those who know it not?* In this work the angels of God will co-operate with them, and those who are dead in trespasses and sins will be convicted and converted. The truth will become a living, working principle in their own hearts, and as they communicate to others that which they have received, the angels of God will communicate fresh and new light to the Christ-like workers. Those who wish to know the reality of Bible truth in their own experience, should impart it to the poor souls who are in the darkness of error."

Thus it is certainly true of us that "when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." Heb. 5:12.

God's gift of teaching and of teachers in that which, if accepted, would make us teachers, must not be slighted. These precious gifts are for the perfecting of the saints, and for the work of the ministry, to bring us all in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man—unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. They will do this if allowed to accomplish that unto which they are sent. But in order that they may do it, they must be appreciated as the gifts of God, and accordingly received and retained by living faith.

The other gift, which we all know that the Lord in his goodness has bestowed upon the church,—

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY,

we have reserved until the last to be considered. This gift, although acknowledged all these years to be in the church, has yet been but comparatively little appreciated or profited by, *for the real purpose for which it is given*, that is, *to draw us to the word of God as it is in Jesus.* The work of prophesying, it is true is "unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort," of the church, and of individuals. But yet this is rather in consequence of the one great object of the Spirit of prophecy, *which is to*

draw men to the word of God and its precious fullness as it is.

The Spirit of prophecy is the means through which Christ himself gives the true understanding and right interpretation of his word. Christ is the Author of the written word of God. This word "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It was "the Spirit of Christ" in these holy men, which testified the things that are written and now preached unto us with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. 1 Peter 1: 11, 12.

It being the word of Christ himself, signified and testified by his own Spirit — by himself through his Holy Spirit — it follows that he alone *by that same Spirit* is qualified to interpret that word and infallibly give the right meaning of it. The only absolutely sure interpreter of any writing is the author of it himself. All others are liable to mistake, or fail to catch the real thought which the author intended to convey. How much more, then, is it so with the word of God — that word which is in meaning of eternal depth! How much more with this than with any other writing, are all others liable to mistake or to fail to catch the real thought of the Author! And how certainly therefore is the Author of this word the *only* one qualified to interpret it and to set forth its deep meaning! Christ alone, in his own proper person by his Holy Spirit, is the interpreter of his word. And that interpretation is infallible; because Christ alone possesses infallibility. Whoever else would presume to interpret the Bible and declare its meaning, would thereby put himself in the place of Christ. And this is the papacy.

Christ alone is the interpreter of his word. And the evidence which he gives, the testimony of Christ, as to the meaning of his word, *that is* the meaning of it *as he thinks it*. That is the truth itself as it is in Jesus. And he who receives it thus receives the thought of Christ. And "the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."

Consequently the one chief object of the gift of prophecy is to draw us to the word of God, and enable us to see *there* the "deep things of God;" to enable us to find *there* the precious hidden treasures; and to bring to understanding the things "that are hard to be understood."

This is the statement of the Testimony itself: —

"You are not familiar with the scriptures. If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that he has sought to reach you

by simple direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you have neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevating teachings.

"The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds *with the importance of the truth of his word*. The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow-man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth *is not brought out*; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given, and in his own chosen way brought them before the people, to *awaken and impress the mind with them*, that all may be left without excuse.

"The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it, and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all." — "Testimony" No. 33, p. 193.

The right use of the Testimonies, therefore, is not to use them *as they are in themselves*, as though they were apart from the word of God in the Bible; but to study the Bible *through them*, so that the things brought forth in them we shall see and know for ourselves *are in the Bible*; and then present those things to others *not from the Testimonies themselves*, but *from the Bible itself* so that all others may see for themselves *that the Bible says so*.

This and this alone is the right use of the Testimonies, whether used privately or publicly. The Testimonies are not to be appealed to with those that are without; for "prophecy serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe." 1 Cor. 14: 22. And as they serve only for those who believe, these are to use them as the means of finding the precious things of the word of God *in the Bible itself*, and then present to those who are without these truths *from the Bible alone*.

As the benefits of this gift as well as of all the others, are "for the work of the ministry," let all our ministers as well as all others of our public workers make the right use of the Testimonies in their work, and there will not be nearly so much prejudice against the Testimonies either in the church or out of it. *That is*, let all faithfully study the Testimonies for themselves, to find the deep and precious things of the word that are there uncovered to the view, *and then* find these same precious things in the Bible (for they are all there somewhere) and make them your own *from the Bible* so that you can make them clear to all *from the Bible alone*.

This of itself will make us all "mighty in the Scriptures." This will give to us all "the tongue of the learned that we shall know how to speak a word

to him that is weary." And besides this then, when the Testimonies are brought to the minds of the people, even by the enemy, we can rest in perfect confidence, knowing that they will find there the very things that they have already heard from the Scriptures, and that they must therefore say that it is good. And besides, then we can tell them that it was by the aid of these that we were enabled to find so many of the deep and precious things of the Bible, and therefore we can with pleasure and with confidence recommend to them the use of the Testimonies for the same purpose, with the certainty of rich returns to all who will make such use of them.

As a general thing indeed, it is better to use the Testimonies in this way *with those who believe*, as well as with those who are without. For a Testimony dated April 16, 1894, upon this subject, stating how every effort and every thing must draw the people to the word of God, goes so far as to say that the people "should not have their attention called to dreams or visions." As this passage is so full and clear upon this point, and as it covers so much of the line traced in this reading, we can probably do no better than to close with the quotation of the passage in full. It is as follows:—

"Calmly and clearly 'preach the word.' (See Scripture.) We must not regard it as our work to create an excitement. The Holy Spirit of God alone can create a healthy enthusiasm. Let God work, and let the human agent walk softly before him, watching, waiting, praying, looking unto Jesus every moment, led and controlled by the precious Spirit which is light and life.

"The people want a sign, as in the days of Christ. Then the Lord told them that no sign should be given them. The sign that should be manifest now and always, is the working of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of the teacher, *to make the word* as impressive as possible. The word of God is not a dead, dry theory, but Spirit and life.

"Satan would like nothing better than to call minds *away from the word*, to look for and expect something *outside of the word* to

make them *feel*. They should not have their attention called to dreams or visions. If they would have eternal life, they must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God.

"In the days of Christ this statement offended many of his professed disciples, so that they went back and walked no more with him. The Lord Jesus explained his own words. He said, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life,' 'Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' This living bread of which Jesus spoke is of consequence; *it is his word*, which he has given us.

"Teach these things. Educate the people to have a sound, solid experience, and do not create in them an appetite for something new, and strange, and startling. These are the very things which those that are weak in moral power crave as the liquor drinker craves liquor, and the result is that they are not sound *in the understanding of the word*. They have not root in themselves, and when the masterly working of Satan shall be made manifest, and he shall perform miracles to testify that he is Christ, those who have been controlled by feeling, who have fed on the sensational, and have been seeking for strange things, *will be carried away*, because they were not feeding on Christ.

"'He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him.' They received life from Christ, just as the branch receives its nourishment from the vine. God help us to move soundly, solidly, because we are eating and drinking the flesh and blood of the Son of God.

"'Preach the word.' Compared with the word, everything else is weakness itself. The word of God is the weapon of our warfare. Educate, train the people to be doers of the word, and they will then abide in Christ, and Christ will abide in them. Then they will discern the delusions of Satan; they will not be ignorant of his devices."

Such is the object of the gifts—"The perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;" *through the word of God*. May the Lord help us that we may so use these as he has appointed, and so be filled with the love of God, with that charity that is the bond of perfectness, which alone brings all good things in its train.

ALONZO T. JONES.

LABORERS TOGETHER WITH GOD.

Reading for Tuesday, December 25.

THE effects of man's sin have been felt in heaven. Man could be saved in no other way than by the sacrifice of God's dear Son. That "God so loved the world" has enlisted the interest and sympathy of all created intelligences. Before sin entered into the world, man "was perfect in his being, and in harmony with God." It is God's plan that he shall be restored to this condition and thus be united with heaven once more. In this plan all heaven is interested. "Which things the angels desire to look into." "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Earth was cut off from heaven by sin, but through Christ and the ministration of the holy angels, the connection is again made. This lesson is taught in the dream of Jacob when "he dreamed and beheld a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and beheld the angels of God ascending and descending upon it."

That earth, once in harmony with heaven, is again to be brought into union with it is shown by many scriptures. God has purposed that "he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth;" and that "unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God;" "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named;" "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;" and "by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." When this purpose is accomplished, then will be fulfilled the scripture: "And every creature which is in heaven, and on 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 for ever and ever."

There was a time when the whole universe was loyal to the government of God. Not a created being questioned his right to rule or the justice of his administration. "So long as all created beings ac-

knowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God! It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting his glory and showing forth his praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confident and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies." But "envy filled the mind of "the anointed cherub that covereth" and his "heart was lifted up" and he said, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." Here began the great controversy between Christ and Satan for the supremacy. Satan was not satisfied with God's plan for him and with the place assigned to him in God's government, but coveted the honor which the Father desired should be given to his only Son. Persisting in this spirit of rebellion and fomenting it in others, after refusing the offers of pardon repeatedly made to him on condition that he should return to his allegiance, "he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Then by his false representations and his lying temptations, he induced man to betray his trust and yield his allegiance and his dominion to the enemy of God. Thus Satan became "the prince of this world." Since that time he "who had been expelled from heaven for leading a rebellion against the supreme Ruler of the universe" has labored untiringly to overthrow God's government in the earth and to establish his own authority in its place. He has made the same false charges against "the King eternal, immortal, invisible" as were made in heaven; viz., that his government was arbitrary, that he was a tyrant and ruled as a despot. Acting as "the Calumniator," he has thus traduced God before men, while as "the accuser of the brethren," he has claimed before the representatives of the universe that man's professed devotion to God was purely selfish, and that there was not sufficient power in the love of God apart from temporal inducements to win men to him and to retain their allegiance. God's plan for the restoration and eleva-

tion of man is in complete contrast in every particular with the inducements held out by Satan. Man was led into disobedience by the promise of great exaltation. "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." But the eternal principle that "whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased" was not set aside in this case, and man, like the angels, kept not his "first estate."

Infinite love and wisdom were now displayed in a plan for man's salvation by which God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." But in this plan, exaltation came by way of humiliation, life came through death, and the path to heaven was by the way of the cross. In the working out of this principle, Christ was the example. He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." And he said to his disciples, "I am among you as he that serveth." Having laid the foundation of the plan in self-denial, he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Leaving man entirely free to choose to whom he would yield his service, he depended wholly upon the power of love to draw him to himself. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." "O, what a God have we! What a Benefactor! What claims has he upon our love! Having collected all the riches of the universe, and laid open all the resources of infinite power, he gave all the heavenly treasures into the hands of Christ, and said, All these are for man. Use them to convince him that there is no greater love than mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness consists in loving me and giving his heart to me who hath loved him with an infinite love."

In the cross of Christ is presented an unparalleled example of the malignity of Satan and the love of God. Satan's charge against the government of God has always been that he was arbitrary, determined to have his own way, demanding of his subjects abject and complete submission, unquestioning obedience, and yet being himself wholly unwilling to sacrifice anything for the good of his creatures. Satan's

inducement to sin was based upon the offer of perfect freedom to those who would obey him. The offer is of course a false one, whether made by him or his followers, for "while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." But in the cross of Christ were shown the extent to which God would go in order to make it possible that his will should be done, and the extent to which Satan would go, in order that he might have his own way. All the persecution which was brought to bear upon Christ during his life upon earth was instigated by Satan. The spirit of persecution is always and everywhere the spirit of Satan. God never compels. He depends upon the constraining power of his love. Therefore his service is always perfect freedom. But Satan does not hesitate to use force. The so-called liberty of his service is all a lying fraud. And so the "god of this world" stirred up the "servants of sin" to harass our Saviour at every step of his earthly career, and finally "put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him." Then as the climax of their continued rejection of him during the whole course of his ministry, the chief priests "all condemned him to be guilty of death," and the multitude "cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him." "And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required." All this was the work of Satan. He "and his angels were busy in the judgment hall to destroy human feeling and sympathy. The very atmosphere was heavy and polluted by their influence. The chief priests and elders were inspired by them to insult and abuse Jesus in a manner the most difficult for human nature to bear. Satan hoped that such mockery and violence would call forth from the Son of God some complaint or murmur; or that he would manifest his divine power, and wrench himself from the grasp of the multitude, and that thus the plan of salvation might at last fail."

"The prince of the power of the air" knew that "if he could tempt Jesus to depart from the will of the Father, his object would be gained," but "Jesus was steadfast." "He chose his life of suffering and his dreadful death, as the way appointed by his Father that he might become a lawful heir to the kingdoms of earth, and have them given into his hands as an everlasting possession." During all the years since the rebellion of Satan, there had been more or less sympathy with his course and more or less failure to comprehend its full result and the justice of God's dealing with him. So instead of blotting

him out of existence, God permitted him to work out before all the universe some of the results of his rebellious course, that all might be convinced of the righteousness of God's government, and might by an intelligent choice render him loyal service. Christ had said, "and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." In the death of Christ, it was seen that in order to accomplish his purpose to overthrow the supremacy of Christ and to shut man out of heaven, Satan would not hesitate to become the murderer of the Son of God, to take the life of "the Prince of life." It was also seen that in order to maintain the supremacy of Christ and thus open the way to heaven for man, God was willing to give his only Son to die, "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." So in the cross of Christ the love of God and the malignity of Satan were fully displayed to a wondering universe.

"When Christ cried out, It is finished, all heaven triumphed. The controversy between Christ and Satan in regard to the execution of the plan of salvation was ended. The spirit of Satan and his works had taken deep root in the affections of the children of men. For Satan to have come into power would have been death to the world. The implacable hatred he felt toward the Son of God was revealed in his manner of treating him while he was in the world. Christ's betrayal, trial, and crucifixion were all planned by the fallen foe. His hatred, carried out in the death of the Son of God, placed Satan where his true diabolical character was revealed to all created intelligences that had not fallen through sin.

"The holy angels were horror-stricken that one who had been of their number could fall so far as to be capable of such cruelty. Every sentiment of sympathy or pity which they had ever felt for Satan in his exile, was quenched in their hearts. That his envy should be exercised in such a revenge upon an innocent person, was enough to strip him of his assumed robe of celestial light, and to reveal the hideous deformity beneath; but to manifest such malignity toward the divine Son of God, who had, with unprecedented self-denial, and love for the creatures formed in his image, come from heaven and assumed their fallen nature, was such a heinous crime against Heaven that it caused the angels to shudder with horror, and severed forever the last tie of sympathy existing between Satan and the heavenly world." "The unfathomable love of God for the human race, in giving his Son to die for them, was made manifest. Christ was revealed in all his self-sacrificing love and purity; man could now obtain immortal life through His merits. When the justice of God was expressed in judicial sentence, declaring the final disposition of Satan — that he should be utterly consumed with all those who ranked under his banner — all heaven rang with hallelujahs, and Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to have all authority and power, and dominion and glory."

Thus the government of God was on trial in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. The one used force, being inspired by hatred, and met with defeat; the other, inspired by love, gained a great victory by yielding. So we are now associated

with all the heavenly intelligences in working out before all the universe, God's great plan of salvation, in demonstrating that God is love, and that his government is founded upon love. In this way it is that "we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." The questions to be settled are these: Is God's government just? Is he an arbitrary ruler? Does he have the good of his subjects in view? Is the power of his love sufficient to win and maintain the loyalty of man, in the face of all the allurements or the trials and persecutions which Satan may bring to bear during this reign of sin, while the children of God remain in this world over which Satan has gained a temporary dominion by fraud? Or does man render a pretended service to God from selfish motives, as "the accuser of our brethren" claims? There have been some notable examples where God has permitted the enemy to put to the test the principles of his government and the power of his love, that the falsity of Satan's charges might be demonstrated again and again, not only in Christ but also in man. The case of Job is the earliest one on record.

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them."

Adam was the son of God in a special sense. We are sons of God by redemption; angels are sons of God by creation. Adam was in a special sense the son of God, as being the first being who inhabited this world; and into his hands was committed, as the representative of God on this earth, the dominion over this earth.

When the sons of God came together as spoken of in the first chapter of Job, there doubtless came together the first being from every world, and they held a counsel with God as to carrying out his plan of government. "And Satan came also among them." How did he happen to be there? What had happened on this earth? — Adam had betrayed his dominion into the hands of Satan, and Satan stepped in, in the place of Adam; and so when the representatives of all the different worlds came together to counsel with God concerning his plan of government, in stepped the devil, and claimed that he belonged there in the place of Adam, because he ruled this earth now.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an

upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?"

This reply made in the presence of the assembled representatives of the universe, was a public charge of unfairness on the part of God, in thus guarding in a special way one whom, as being in his dominion, Satan claimed the right to control. And this was accompanied by the insinuation that Job's loyalty was not genuine, but a pretended allegiance gained by bribery.

The Lord said, "Have you noticed my servant Job?" "Yes," said Satan, "I have noticed him; but he does not really love you. There is no true allegiance in his service. There is no integrity about it."

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand."

Then Satan went forth, and destroyed sons and daughters, herds and flocks,—everything.

"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

And the Lord said unto Satan, "You observe that that man Job still remains firm in his integrity to me?" Is Satan convinced?—No.

"Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face."

And so Satan was permitted to bring all those afflictions upon Job. But he remained steadfast, true to God through the whole experience.

"Moreover Job continued his parable, and said, As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul; all the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him."

Now what does that mean to us?—It means that we do not know ourselves what the meaning of every experience that comes to us may be. Here is one who is passing through deep trouble, as was Job. His first inclination is to say, What have I done that all this trouble should come upon me? Haven't I been a faithful servant of God? Why

all this affliction, all this sorrow, all this trouble? Haven't I remained steadfast to God? Who knows but what "the accuser of our brethren" may be pointing his finger at you and saying, Does the man serve God for nought? And who knows but what in your case God's reputation may be risked, and he will say, "He holdeth fast his integrity?"

The life and death of John the Baptist give us another illustration of this principle. "John's life, with the exception of the joy he experienced in witnessing the success of his mission, was without pleasure. It was one of sorrow and self-denial. He who heralded the first advent of Christ, was not permitted to personally hear nor to witness the power manifested by him." After he had been imprisoned on account of his plain reproof of Herod's sin, "he decided that if Jesus was really the Son of God and could do all things, he would exercise his power and set him at liberty." And so he sent his disciples to inquire of Christ, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus said to the disciples of John, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." John being thus gently reproofed, "better understood the character of Christ's mission. And with submission and faith, he yielded himself into the hands of God, to live or to die, as should best advance his glory." "Steadfast as a rock stood the prophet of God, faithful to rebuke sin and crime in all their forms, in kings and nobles, as readily as in the unhonored and unknown. He swerved not from duty. Loyal to his God, in noble dignity of moral character, he stood firm as a rock, faithful to principle." "John, by his unselfish joy in the successful ministry of Jesus, presents to the world the truest type of nobility ever exhibited by mortal man." And God permitted him to die at the hands of wicked men as a lesson to all worlds that the love of God can inspire a loyalty in the heart of man stronger than life. God knew that he would maintain his integrity, and in thus allowing him to suffer, he bore the strongest testimony to his appreciation of such loyalty.

The whole question is one of loyalty to God, as against every charge that Satan can bring against God's government, as against every power that Satan can bring against us to turn us away from God, to lead us to disbelieve his word, to distrust his purposes, to turn in rebellion against him. Our place

is to stand firm, loyal to God, loyal to the government of God. And our place is to stand firm in that way, not simply for the purpose of gaining heaven, but that God's name may be glorified before the whole universe. When the purpose of our service is merely to gain heaven, we shall fail both of glorifying God and of gaining heaven too. There can be no selfishness about the religion of Jesus Christ, and it requires that allegiance to God, that devotion to God, that loyalty to his government, that one would remain firm to God if he knew he would never get into heaven, if he knew that he would go right to the gate and be shut out. Yet let God be true, though every man be a liar; let God be justified before the whole universe, in the plan of salvation.

What is God's purpose concerning us? "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," a ransomed or purchased people. For what purpose? "That ye should shew forth the praises [or the virtues, or the excellencies; that is, that ye should shew forth the character] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." The purpose of God is that in every one who yields himself to God, in every one who remains loyal to God and to his government, who chooses his plan of government, instead of Satan's plan, shall be shown forth, not only to all the world but to all the universe, the character of God as revealed in Jesus Christ; and every one who remains loyal to God, every one who in the grace of Christ strives against sin, and in whom the grace of God is sufficient to overcome sin, stands forth before all the universe as a living testimony to the grace, the power, and the love of God in Jesus Christ; and by his life, by his daily conduct, gives the lie to Satan's charge that God is unreasonable, that he is unlovable, and he declares to all the world and to all the universe that God is a God of love, of justice, of mercy, and that his grace is sufficient.

"Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

"*Ye are my witnesses.*" How shall we prove the justice of the government of God? How shall we prove that his love is sufficient to hold us to him? He will say, "Look at this people on the earth who have yielded to the power of my love, and in whom my character is being wrought out, in spite of

Satan." "*Ye are my witnesses.*" Not simply what you say, but what you are. The very fact that men and women remain loyal to God as against all the allurements of Satan, the very fact that the traits of character exemplified by Christ on earth are being shown forth here in the earth, in humanity, now, is all the evidence that heaven and earth need to show that God's plan of government is right, that it will succeed, that his love is sufficient to draw to him, and that his government, founded upon the principle of love, will endure to all eternity.

If there is any motive that would lead one to remain true to God, it seems as though it would be this idea that God has called him, and has trusted him to represent his government, and is permitting him before all the universe to be a public example of what the government of God means, and of what the love of God in Christ can do for humanity. When tempted to turn aside, to turn from God, what thought should hold us? — It is that the eyes of the universe are upon us; that God's honor is at stake in us; that he has entrusted us with the riches of his grace; that he has bestowed his love upon us, not merely to bring us to himself — which will all be done — but also to demonstrate before all created intelligences that his love is sufficient to draw to him, that his love has sufficient power to hold to him; and that he can point to us and say, "There are the witnesses; there are those who give the lie to the charge of Satan that my love cannot draw to me, and that I am unjust and unreasonable." And to every one is committed the privilege of showing forth before the universe the character of God, and demonstrating before them all, that God is love. That is the work to which God calls every believer in him.

And it is in doing this work that we are "laborers together with God." To every man is given his work, and God expects every man to do with fidelity that which is entrusted to him, but the same principle runs through it all, and that is, loyalty to the government of God. And thus it is that it is not so much the greatness of the service as the spirit with which it is performed, which counts with God. The one who in the humblest place is patiently enduring for Christ's sake, is showing forth "the virtues" of God. The same responsibility rests upon all, whether in public station or in private life, to be faithful in maintaining the principles of God's character and in displaying the power of his love and divine grace. Let no Christian, however humble his place may be in life, feel that he is not a laborer

together with God. All heaven is interested in the success of each one, and "there is no respect of persons with God." "When human agents become doers of the words and works of Christ, joy is created throughout the unfallen universe, and songs of rejoicing resound through all the heavenly worlds."

Christ became a sharer in our humanity that we might become sharers in his divinity, and that by this union of the human and the divine in us we might be "more than conquerors through him that loved us." It is this consecrated partnership which makes us indeed "laborers together with God."

W. W. PRESCOTT.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD.

Reading for Wednesday, December 26.

THIS year, eighteen hundred and ninety-four, marks the twentieth anniversary of our work in foreign lands. Did time and space permit, a retrospective view of the results achieved would be most interesting. Many striking comparisons could be instituted, showing the marked progress of the message, and the victories it has gained. In all the past it has many times been demonstrated that God was leading in the work, and that our faith did not "stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Truly has the "Angel of his presence" gone before us, and in all the way the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night have been unto his people emblems of his divine presence. Every one as he recounts to-day, the blessings of the past, can say as did Jacob, "Hitherto hath God helped me." And we are not confined to the past for evidences of God's workings. Was there one instance of divine manifestation last year, there are ten this. Have we witnessed droppings of the latter rain in our past history, we have now reached the time of its outpouring, the season of bountiful, refreshing showers.

The harvest of the earth is fast ripening for the final gathering. The nations are rapidly filling up the cup of their iniquity, and preparing for the last great conflict. In every quarter are mutterings of the coming storm. But while the elements of evil are combining on the one side, the message of God is gathering power on the other. In fulfillment of the prophecy it is even now going to earth's remotest bounds, "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." God has indeed "set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign

for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Isa. 11: 11, 12.

From every part of the field come most encouraging reports of the carrying forward of this very work foretold by the prophetic seer. Beginning with the Central European Mission field, where were begun our first efforts in lands outside of America, we see marked evidences that the message is stirring the minds of the people in a most remarkable manner. From the small handful of scattered Sabbath-keepers found there by Elder J. N. Andrews in 1874, there has grown up the substantial work of to-day,—an organized Conference numbering 500 souls, and a well-equipped office of publication, from which thousands of pages of literature are sent out monthly to the surrounding nations. Embracing as it does some of the Bible lands of the past, special interest attaches to this field. And in some of these old historical regions has the message to-day gained its greatest triumphs. Constantinople the past year has witnessed the organization of a good church, and a deep interest prevails in the hearts of many. The experiences of our brethren in Asia Minor, on the old battle-field contested by the great apostle to the Gentiles, read, as do his, almost like romance, so full are they of startling adventure, and yet withal of wonderful deliverances from the rage of the bigoted populace.

Down on the Alpine valleys a cloud of persecution and trial has been settling during the last few months. The running of our office on Sunday has stirred the wrath of the enemy, and efforts have been made by the authorities of Basel to shut off our work. The same spirit is here shown as has been manifested in our Southern States in recent persecutions. The enemy of the truth is trying to obstruct its progress and lessen its power; but, contrary to his designs,

the persecution is but serving to spread the message, and at present many of the best people in Switzerland are greatly interested in the contest over Sunday observance. The fact that our position is one of principle and not of policy, enlists the interest and sympathy of well-thinking people. Of late the notices of our work in the public journals, are much more fair, full, and frequent. The persecution of our brethren seems to be known by everybody, and not one is met that has not heard of it. One leading man says that he has thought of it much, and given the question much study; is aware that a great principle is at stake, and is glad that we have the courage to take such a stand. Already we can see that the experience has done more to call the attention of the people to our work than anything else that has ever happened.

As illustrating the interest thus awakened, the following from Elder H. P. Holser is to the point:—

"I visited a lady in Zurich, whose address had been received from friends in New York. Her daughter accepted the truth in New York, and the mother was much agitated over it; and when we called, the conversation at once turned on the truth. She said that people could never keep the Sabbath and earn a living in Zurich. I replied that I thought they could. But she said she did not know of one in the city; she had read of some in Basel, but knew of no others in Switzerland. We have held meetings in Zurich, have had a small church there for a number of years, and have colportered the city many times; but with all this the woman had never heard of us. But the trial we have been undergoing in Basel reached her at once. It is something so unusual that it attracts the attention of the people."

Close and trying times are before our workers in Switzerland, but "the Lord will not forsake his people." Our brethren and sisters are sensing the situation, and feel determined not to sacrifice principle for temporal or worldly advantage.

Progress has been the watchword in the German-Russian field. The mission training school at Hamburg is doing much in providing educated native talent for the work. Of the seventeen young men who are preparing themselves for labor at the present time, five are from Russia, and expect soon to return to work in that land of iron-bound creeds and stereotyped religion. We have in this field no capital invested in the work of publishing. God has given into our hands as it were the agencies established by others in this line, and several leading publishers have gladly taken our tracts and pamphlets, and, in addition to the work of translating and printing, have given their influence in pushing the circulation of the same. Nor are these men insensible to the character of the work they are

doing. A Hungarian translator, who is also the editor of a religious paper, gives this notice of "Steps to Christ" in a recent issue of his journal:—

"The editor of this paper translated a very good book from the English lately, which is now being printed at Buda-Pesth. I can freely say that I have never read a book like it. No book resembles it in exhausting the spiritual life, the living Christianity, so fully. I recommend it to everybody; but to my believing brethren I would say, If you cannot do otherwise, sell your overcoat and buy the book, for it is worthy; but if you have no overcoat to sell, and you still want it badly, we will furnish it free from our mission funds."

In Russia to-day, as in the past, many evidences of the power of the truth are constantly seen. Though bound about by creed and custom, and under the closest surveillance of officer and priest, there are found those who love religious more than civil liberty, and who boldly and fearlessly take their stand for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. One brother was recently visited by a priest, who tried to persuade him to return to the Greek Church. In the discussion the priest himself was convicted of the truth, and declared openly that he would renounce his office and live out the message; whereupon he was seized, and is now in prison, probably awaiting transportation to Siberia. In another quarter of the empire, our brethren are obliged to meet Sabbath morning before daybreak to hold religious service, in order to escape interference from the officers. But in spite of these difficulties, the truth goes forward, and the brethren are of good courage.

In the Scandinavian and British mission fields the message is onward. A school in Denmark, which has opened most favorably, will add new power and influence to the work in Scandinavia. The meetings held in the towns of England by our workers, have been of the most encouraging character, and show that the message in that field is taking deep root and bearing fruit.

A most needy field exists in the far East, one almost entirely destitute of laborers. A small beginning has been made in the sale of our books in India. For several months it has been contemplated sending a minister with several Bible workers to that country; but no one has yet been found who could be spared from the home field. Truly India has claims upon us with its 287,000,000 souls, who cannot discern between the right hand and the left. The efforts of the two brethren now laboring there will soon be supplemented by the help of a brother who, with his wife and son, is enroute from Australia. Having spent in the past, twenty years in India, it

is hoped that this family will prove a great help to the work.

In Hong Kong two ship missionaries are laboring in the circulation of our literature. They report many interesting experiences. Among those who have embraced the truth from reading, is a British sea captain, who now desires to enter the work, to give the precious light he has received to others of his countrymen who are in darkness. A great field for missionary effort is presented by the countries of the Orient. The doors of the nations are open, and from every quarter there sounds the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." In India and China we have made a small beginning; but the great unnumbered majority of these countries know naught of a Saviour's love. Thousands are passing daily into eternity who have never heard of the Saviour whom we adore and honor to-day. Added to these countries are Japan, Korea, and the states of interior Asia, in none of which we have a missionary at work. To all these must the message go, for its extent is to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." May the mute appeal which these millions make to us in their lost condition, stir us to an energy, zeal, and devotion that we have not known in the past!

The great continent of Africa has been touched at but three points. On the Gold Coast two brethren have been employed during the past few months in the sale of our publications. A few are keeping the Sabbath, and others are much interested, desiring the establishment of mission schools. Several greatly desire baptism. Long have these people been promised a minister. They have been encouraged to hope a little longer, and we trust that before another week of prayer comes to us, ministers, teachers, and medical missionaries will have been sent to them. The work in southern Africa is making good headway. The College is exerting a most beneficial influence, and from those of the outside has come the request that our people furnish a day school for their children. This has been done, with good results already apparent. The Sanitarium now in process of erection will prove another influential factor in our work in that Conference.

In interior Africa, to which our attention has been directed several times of late, an opening has been made. Land for a mission site has been freely granted by the company in control of the territory, and everything now bids fair for the accomplishment of a good work. The importance of this move is not to be measured alone by the influence this station

will have upon the surrounding natives, but it is hoped to use this mission as a base for operations further inland. The great interior of the Dark Continent is before us, and we should not be slow to follow up the advantage already gained in this country. But this fact should be borne in mind, that as our work enters into the heathen lands, it will be much more expensive than that done in civilized countries, and in consequence will demand from us a corresponding largeness of heart and liberality of soul. But the same as the most glorious triumphs of the cross in the apostolic period were seen among the outcast of the heathen, so will it be true in our own work.

Our first experiment in the line of medical missions has been made in our sister republic, Mexico. Of the success of this mission from its very opening, all are familiar from the published reports. The value of this means of labor has been fully proven by the avenues and openings for missionary effort which it has provided, and no doubt in the future it will be found expedient in many instances to employ this old-time gospel method in the carrying forward of our work. Of the interest at the present time, Elder D. T. Jones, superintendent of the mission, writes: —

"It is really a surprise to me, and I attribute it all to the special favor of the Lord, and not to any wise plans or management, how we are getting in favor with the best class of people in the city. The mother of the lieutenant-governor is taking treatment; also the daughter of General G——, a retired army general. These are considered among the very first families of the city. Our intercourse with them is not simply a professional one, but they seem to enjoy coming to our house and having us go to theirs. A few days ago a sister of the lieutenant-governor died very suddenly. On such occasions their etiquette is to send out written or printed invitations to their special friends to visit the family, and for the men to accompany the remains to the cemetery. On the occasion referred to we received invitations. The governor with other state officials and prominent citizens were present.

"During the month of August the average daily attendance was a little over forty. The other missionaries here, and those who visit the city, are very much surprised at the way we get hold of the people. The Baptists are holding an association in this city at the present time. Yesterday one of their leading missionaries, a doctor of divinity, took dinner with us, and seemed much interested in our work. A young Baptist minister has been coming to study the Bible with me. He first came to inquire about the Sabbath, and since has been coming every week, and sometimes two or three times a week. He seems really interested, and is an intelligent man."

A successful work is going forward in British Honduras, in which a number have embraced the truth, and others are deeply interested. In the Bay Islands, during the past year, a church and mission

school-house have been built, and two teachers have been sent to carry on the work. The school is doing good work. Nearly fifty pupils are enrolled, and about thirty are taking instruction in instrumental music. A favorable impression is being created by the school, and it will greatly tend to strengthen and give character to the work already done.

The progress of the message in the West India Islands has been no less marked than in other fields. Our missionary in Jamaica reports a growing interest. One Baptist minister has openly declared for the truth, and is now leading a number of his flock in the path of obedience. In Kingston, during the last year, a church has been organized, and from there the work is spreading out into other villages. The call for a missionary to be sent to the Windward and Leeward islands is still unanswered. The interest in those groups is deeper than ever before. The two little companies at Barbadoes and Antigua have been faithful in keeping the lamp of truth burning; and united to the efforts of the church at Bridgetown, two canvassers from America have been doing good work. As a result of the books sold, a deep interest has sprung up, and several have recently begun the observance of the Sabbath. A similar interest has been awakened in the Bahama group by the sale of "Bible Readings." These places must be added to the already extended list of unfilled openings for missionary work. The one unpleasant feature of our work in this field during the past year, has come by the sad death of Elder A. E. Flowers, who was sent to Trinidad to follow up the interest awakened by the circulation of our literature. Some one must soon be chosen to follow up the good work begun. About twenty-five are now keeping the Sabbath, and others are right on the point of deciding.

South America, like Africa, has but barely been touched by the truths of the message. It was one year ago that a minister and his wife were sent to British Guiana, to carry on the work begun there several years before. By their efforts, the church has been greatly strengthened. Many calls for labor are being received from other towns in both the British and Dutch possessions. Among five who were recently baptized was a minister of the Church of England, who is now earnestly laboring for his former congregation. The books sold in Argentine and Southern Brazil have awakened a deep interest, especially among the French and German colonies. A large colony of Waldenses is greatly stirred. Our publications have taken a deep hold upon this ancient

and historic people. They are now earnestly calling for a minister to be sent to them. We have one ordained missionary in this field. Only two are to be found in the great South American continent, with its more than 30,000,000 souls. Aside from the countries named, the other republics have never been entered by our workers. From this field, as also from the West Indies, come earnest calls for ministers, Bible workers, and medical missionaries. How long can we delay in sending more laborers to this great country?

From the earliest experiences of John G. Paton and John Williams down to the labors of our own missionaries, success has attended gospel work in the great island world of Polynesia. The present voyage of the "Pitcairn" is proving most successful. Laborers have been left at Raratonga, Rurutu, Raiatea, Pitcairn, and other islands. On its next voyage, after our next General Conference, a goodly company of teachers, medical missionaries, and ministerial laborers should be sent out to fill the constantly occurring openings. Government interference with our schools in Tahiti and Raiatea has caused no little concern to our workers in those islands during the last few months. We trust, however, that the cloud may soon roll away, and that what seemed so dark and foreboding to the future of the work, may but prove a blessing in disguise.

From the Australian field precious victories are reported. Encouraging additions have been made to nearly all of our churches, and while the work has been affected by the great financial depression which has prevailed, many evidences of divine favor have appeared. It is expected that the school building so long in contemplation, and for which there exists so great a need, will soon be erected. This will prove a valuable help in the furtherance of the work. The great need of our work in all lands to-day is educated, devoted laborers. During the last year the *Bible Echo* has been issued weekly. By a house-to-house sale from week to week its circulation has augmented upward of 10,000 copies. A new journal, the *Australian Sentinel*, has recently been started, and its advent is none too early, for already the popular trend of public sentiment is setting in toward the enforcement of present religious laws and the enactment of new ones. The arrest and imprisonment of several of our brethren for Sunday labor, shows, in a small measure, the spirit which must be met but a little in advance of this.

Thus is the message moving onward to its final

triumph. It rests no longer in the field of experiment, but its success is an assured fact. Clouds may arise in its horizon, obstacles may for a time seem to obstruct its pathway, but victory is perched upon its banners. No unhallowed hand can stop its progress. Calumny may defame, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, and bigoted prejudice and blind credulity may wage relentless warfare; but the truth of God will go forth conquering and to conquer, bold in its holy might, fearless in its undaunted zeal. It will sweep every clime, visit every continent, and sound in every ear, witnessing to rich and poor, free and bond, small and great. The gleamings of the golden morning already light up the eastern horizon. Satan with the frenzy of despair is multiplying his temptations, his doubts, his darkness. To the believer these are but additional evidences of speedy victory. Soon "He who shall come will come and will not tarry." O, glorious day of coming deliverance, soon to be ushered in!

But in the contemplation of the glorious future, and in the memories of past triumphs, let us not fail to realize the needs of the present hour. We are still in the time of waiting, the time of labor. The work of preparation for the Lord's coming is not yet complete. He cannot return till every soul among all the nations of the earth has had opportunity for salvation. Upon us rests the burden of messengers. We are "debtors both to the Greeks and to the bar-

barians, both to the wise and unto the unwise." To-day as never before, is the Lord saying to many hearts, "Depart, for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles." Says the prophet in speaking of this time: "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after that I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rock." "For thus saith the Lord God, behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that is scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country." "I will feed my flock and cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." This gathering is now taking place. Who of those here to-day will have a part in the gathering work? There is opportunity for all to labor, and God will hold every individual responsible, not only for what has been done, but for what might have been accomplished through his grace.

F. M. WILCOX.

LIVING FAITH VS. A DEAD FORMALISM.

Reading for Thursday, December 27.

THE term "living faith" is strictly proper; because faith indeed is a living thing. The just live by faith, and no man can live by what has no life in it. As we can live only by that which brings life to us, and as we live by faith, it is plain that faith is a living thing.

Again: Faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2: 8), and he is the living God; Jesus is its Author (Heb. 12: 2), and in him is life—he is the life. In the nature of things that which comes from such a source must be of itself imbued with life. And as faith does come wholly from him who is only the living God, from him who alone is life, and not from ourselves (Eph. 2: 8); it is certainly imbued with life and so brings life to men, by which we may live indeed.

Again: Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10: 17); that word is "the faithful word" (Titus 1: 9), that is, the word *full of faith*; and that word is "the word of life." Phil. 2: 16. Therefore as the word of God brings faith, and is full of faith; and as that word is the word of life, it is evident that faith is life, is a living thing, and brings life from God to him who exercises it.

What life is it then which faith brings to men?—Coming as it does from God, through Jesus Christ who is the "Author of life," the only life with which it is imbued and which it could possibly bring to men is *the life of God*. The life of God is what men need and what we must have. And it is the life that God wants us to have; for it is written: "Walk

not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being *alienated from the life of God.*" Eph. 4: 17, 18. To be alienated from the life of God is to be separated from the life of God, and a stranger to it. This is the condition of those who are without God; for they are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." Eph. 2: 12. But the Lord does not want men to be separated from the life of God: for this is death. And he has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.

Therefore those who are strangers and foreigners, those who are alienated from the life of God, *who will believe in Jesus*, he makes nigh by the blood of Christ; so that they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Thus to the believers in Jesus, he says: "Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace who hath made both one." Eph. 2: 13, 14. Even though it be true that this refers to making both Jew and Gentile one, the point is that this is accomplished *only* by making both *at one with God*. And men are made one with God only in Jesus Christ, who has come between and makes us one with God *in himself*. This is the atonement — the *at-one-ment*.

Jesus came that men might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10: 10. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5: 11, 12. And Christ is received by faith, and he dwells in the heart by faith. Eph. 3: 17. Therefore as the life of God only, eternal life, is in Jesus Christ, and as Christ dwells in the heart *by faith*, it is as plain as anything can be that faith brings the life of God to him who exercises it.

It is the life of Jesus himself that is to be made manifest in our bodies, "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." 2 Cor. 4: 11. And the life of Jesus is manifested in us, by Christ himself living in us; for "Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live *by the faith* of the Son of God." Gal. 2: 20. This is living faith.

Again he says, "I will dwell in them and walk in them;" "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you;" and "because I live, ye shall live also." John 14: 18, 19. It is by the Holy Spirit

that he dwells in us; for he desires you "to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, *that Christ may dwell in your hearts.*" Eph. 3: 16, 17. And "at that day" — the day that ye receive the gift of the Holy Ghost — "*ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*" John 14: 20. "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." 1 John 3: 24. And we "receive the promise of the Spirit *through faith.*" Gal. 3: 14.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." We must have the blessing of Abraham in order to receive the promise of the Spirit. The blessing of Abraham is righteousness *by faith*. See Rom. 4: 1-13. Having this, Abraham "received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had." And *we having this*, can freely receive the promise of the Spirit circumcising the heart unto holiness and the seal of the righteousness of the faith which we had. Having the blessing of Abraham, and so being sons of God, God *sends* forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. Gal. 3: 26; 4: 4-6. Having the blessing of Abraham, that you may receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, *then* ask that ye may receive — yea, ask and ye *shall* receive. For the word of God has promised, and faith cometh by hearing the word of God. Therefore ask in faith, nothing wavering, "for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Such is living faith — the faith that comes from the living God; the faith of which Christ is the Author; the faith which comes by the word of God; the faith which brings life and power from God to men, and which works the works of God in him who exercises it; the faith which receives the Holy Spirit that brings the living presence of Jesus Christ to dwell in the heart and manifest himself still in mortal flesh. This and this alone is living faith. By this, Christians live. This is life itself. This is everything. Without this, everything is simply nothing; or worse; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

With such faith as this, that is with *true* faith, there never can arise any question as to works; for this faith *itself* works, and he who has it, necessarily works. It is impossible to have this faith and not have works. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith *which* worketh by love." Gal. 5: 6. This faith

being a living thing, cannot exist without working. And coming from God, the only works that it can possibly work are the works of God.

Therefore anything that professes to be faith which of itself does not work the salvation of the individual having it, and which then does not work the works of God in him who professes it, *is not faith at all*, but is a fraud that that individual is passing off upon himself, which brings no grace to the heart, and no power to the life. It is dead, and he is still dead in trespasses and sins, and all his service is only a form without power, and therefore is only a dead formalism.

But on the other hand, the faith which is of God, which comes by the word of God and brings Christ the living word to dwell in the heart and shine in the life—this is true faith which through Jesus Christ only lives and works in him who exercises it.

Christ himself living in *us*; Christ in you the hope of glory; God with us; God manifest in the flesh *now, to-day in our flesh*, by the faith of Jesus Christ—this and this only is living faith. For “every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ *is* come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that *is in you*, than he that is in the world.” 1 John 4:2-4.

Therefore, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” Jesus said unto them and to us all: “Have the faith of God.” Mark 11:22, margin.

This is what the Lord has desired ever since sin entered. This he desires forevermore. This is the all-important lesson that he sought to impress upon Israel from the day that he brought them out of the land of Egypt. When Moses said to him, “See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me,” the Lord did not even then tell him whom he would *send* with him, nor that he would *send anybody* with him. But the Lord did say to him: “*My presence shall go with thee.*” Instead of sending some one with us the Lord *goes* with us *himself*. It is far better to have the Lord himself go with us than to have some one else go, even though the Lord should send him. But this is just the great goodness of the Lord. He desires to go with us himself. He wants to be with us; this is the longing of his heart.

It is true that he sent Jesus, his only begotten Son; but this is altogether that he himself might come to us, and go with us always. For Jesus is the revelation of the Father. He is “God with us.” By choosing sin, man separated himself from God. Yet in spite of this, the Lord would again dwell with men who would choose his way. But in sin, man could not bear the unveiled glory of the presence of the Most High. Therefore Jesus came to us and indeed became *us*, veiling his transcendent glory with human flesh, in order that God with *him* might be God with *us*. He emptied himself and took our form and nature, that in his love and in his pity the Father might come to us as he is; and that we might know him that is true and be in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Therefore he said long ago, and says always: “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, *with him also* that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” Isa. 57:15. Thus in Jesus, God himself dwells in us, and goeth with us. And therefore thus saith the Lord: “Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee: yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” Isa. 41:10, 13. This is true to-day, and it was true to Israel in the day that God took *them* by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt and unto himself. And it is no more true to-day and to us than it was in that day and to them. Therefore he said *then*, as he says now and always, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

To this word *then*, Moses replied as we and all men must ever reply: “If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.” Ex. 33:15, 16.

Nothing but the constantly abiding presence of God can ever separate us from this world or from the people or the things of this world. And this, for the simple reason that, as a real matter of fact, all of this world that can ever bother us is just what is *inside of us*, and a part of us. Jesus “gave

himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." Gal. 1:4. Our sins are all from within us, and are but part and parcel of us. This body is a "body of death" simply because it is a "body of sin." Rom. 6:6; 7:24. In delivering us from our sins, Jesus delivers us from this present evil world. It is therefore plain that all of this world that can ever cause us any trouble is that which is in us and of us, by our sins being in us and of us. But thank the Lord that God in Jesus Christ *can* deliver us from this present evil world, because he can deliver and cleanse us from all sin.

He delivers us from our sins, by delivering us from ourselves. And this he does by giving us himself and taking up his abode with us, and so dwelling with us and being in us. Without God with us, we are ourselves only of this world and of the people of this world; therefore to undertake to separate ourselves from this world and from the people of this world, would be but an attempt to separate ourselves *from ourselves*. But that we never can do. Therefore it is eternally true that the only way in which we can ever possibly be separated from this world or from the people of this world, is by the presence of God going ever with us. "So shall we be separated from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

Just here is the point where

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enters and takes the place of living faith. People want to be the Lord's; they want to serve the Lord; they want to go to heaven; and knowing that this requires separation from the world, they "try to give up the world." But instead of finding the living presence of the Lord by living faith, which of itself would accomplish all that is required and all that the heart can rightly desire, they undertake to separate themselves from the world and from the things that are in the world. This they hope to do by professing religion, joining the church, practicing the forms of religion, and "doing their best" to keep the commandments and obey the Scriptures. Not having the living presence of Christ in the heart to accomplish of itself the will of God and to work the works of God, they hope to supply the lack by practicing of themselves the forms of religion. But all this is only the form of godliness without the power, and can never bring peace to the mind nor rest to the heart.

The profession of religion without the living presence and power of Christ in the heart and mani-

festated in the life, is only a dead formalism. It matters not though it be the profession of Christianity itself, and a practice of all the forms of service and of worship that pertain to Christianity; if Christ himself is not a living presence and power in the heart and life, giving life to all the forms of service and of worship in which we engage, then it is all simply an outward service of mere forms and is therefore only a dead formalism.

The forms even of Christianity can never give life to the observer of them. No; life is found *only in Christ* himself, by a living faith. And having by living faith found him who alone is life, he then is life to us and to all the forms too. Then all the service, and all the forms of service of Christ are always a delight. But to practice the forms of God's service with the hope of *getting life*, instead of because we have the life of God already by having him who is the life, is a wearisome and vain procedure, and a profitless business.

That this principle may be seen as it is in truth, let us review the things that were written aforetime for our learning—the things that happened unto them for examples, and which are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.

The Lord called Israel unto himself and chose them to be his people. He gave them his presence, even himself, to go with them. He preached the gospel to them, and the gospel is always "Christ in you the hope of glory." But they would not believe him. Num. 14:11; Deut. 32:20. So "the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Heb. 4:2. And so not having his presence in the heart to separate them from themselves, they were so like the nations round that they were constantly falling away to the worship of their gods. Then when by this their burdens grew so heavy that they themselves realized that they could not be borne, they would turn unto the Lord with all the heart, and would put their trust in him alone, and thus would find deliverance from their sins and from all their oppressors. But finding themselves delivered, they did not still cultivate and court the presence of the Lord, and therefore their religion soon again became formal and they themselves so like the nations round that soon they again took up with their ways and worshiped their gods.

But if they had only set their hearts upon the Lord and trusted him *all the time*, as they did in these spells of reform, they would have found him

to be *all the time* just what he was on these occasions, and then their whole course would have been but one continual progress upward and onward, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour. Then they would have been a light to all the nations around.

When, however, they had continued this course of "ups and downs" for a long time, then instead of being brought by their experience to the point where they should finally and forever distrust themselves and trust the Lord *only*, they came to the place where they actually distrusted *the Lord* and said that he had *not fulfilled his promises* — that the Lord had promised that they should be separate from all the nations, but it was not so; that he had promised that when all their males should go up three times in the year to worship before him, no man should desire their land, whereas instead of this the heathen were constantly overrunning the land and taking everything they had when their men *were all at home*; that the Lord had promised that they should be blessed above all people, but instead of this being so, they were actually having a worse time than the heathen themselves!!

This was all true — though not in the way that they meant it. It is true that he who would have both worlds, finds a harder and more unsatisfactory way than he who takes only one, whichever it may be. And therefore the Saviour said, "Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt." Matt. 12:33. He would rather have a man make no pretensions to godliness than to have him profess it and have it only a form without the power. So with Israel, what they said was true; but it was altogether their own fault, and not the Lord's at all. He never proposed to give them all the blessings, and do all these great things for them, *apart from himself*. To do that would only have built them up in their own estimation, and have separated them further from him, instead of from their sins and from the nations around. Instead of this, the Lord desired to draw them closer and closer to himself so that he should be in them and they in him, that he might be *all* in all of them.

Therefore all his promises were to be fulfilled to them, and all his spiritual blessings were to be realized by them, by the Lord himself being in them and with them. And this could be only by a living, abiding faith. And when they had not his presence with them, by which alone the promises could be fulfilled, they could say truly that the promises had

not been fulfilled to them. And this is true always. But let the people find him, the living Christ, a living abiding presence in the heart by living faith, and they will find all the promises of God fulfilled always. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." 2 Cor. 1:20. O that all would find him the living Saviour, with *all the heart*! The world then would see what the Lord has been longing all these ages that they should see.

When in their unbelief they had reached the point at which the consequences of their own unbelief made it "clear" to their minds that the Lord had not fulfilled his promises, it was equally "clear" that they must do something to fulfill the promises themselves; for surely the promises must be fulfilled in some way, and if not by the Lord, then they concluded by themselves, of course.

The Lord had said of Israel, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23:9); and that they should be separate from other people also. But as the continued raids of the heathen in overrunning the land had made it "clear," as they concluded, that for all practical purposes the government of God had failed, they decided that they must set up a government of their own "like all the nations," in order that they themselves might keep themselves separate from the nations.

Therefore they said to Samuel, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations." And though the Lord told Samuel to "protest solemnly" against it, and show them the manner of the government and the mischiefs that it would create, "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us, that we may also be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected me*, that I should not reign over them." Then when the mischiefs came which the Lord had pointed out, instead of the people and their rulers humbling themselves and seeking the Lord with all the heart, they still reflected all back upon him. And when the Lord would send his servants with a message for the people, the message was slighted and even resented, and the messenger was accused of creating discord, causing division, and troubling Israel! 1 Kings 18:17; 21:20; Amos 7:10-13; Jer. 38:1-6 and many other places.

Instead, however, of this in any way separating them from the nations, it only made them so much the more like the nations. And the longer it continued the worse it grew, until they actually became worse than the heathen — both Israel and Judah in turn — and there was no remedy but to empty the land of them and scatter them among the nations. In their own way they had gone so far from the Lord, and had become so entirely like all the people that are upon the face of the earth, that the only way in which the Lord could get them separated

from all the nations was to scatter them *among* all the nations. For when they had been carried captive out of their own land, and were scattered in little colonies among the heathen, then they wept when they remembered Zion, and in their sorrow and oppression they sought the Lord and found him. And his presence which they thus found, and which they should always have had, separated them from all the people among whom they were scattered and from all the people that were upon the face of the earth.

ALONZO T. JONES.

LIVING FAITH VS. A DEAD FORMALISM.

(Continued.)

Reading for Friday, December 28.

ANOTHER great evil sprang from the lack of the presence of the Lord to go with his people. Not having life by having him who is the life, they sought to obtain it through the forms of worship and of service which he had appointed. The Lord appointed certain forms and ceremonies through which the life that they should find in him should be signified and manifested in their service and worship. But not having him in the heart, who alone gives life and meaning to all the forms which he has appointed, and not having life from him, they sought to obtain it in the forms themselves. This led them into the bondage of an intense, exact and exacting ceremonialism, and to the vain hope of obtaining salvation by this; instead of the liberty and joy of a salvation already obtained by living faith. In short, not having life by *faith* they sought it by *works*.

For instance, the Lord gave the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness which was obtained *by faith* without being circumcised. But they not having the righteousness which is by faith, sought to obtain it *by circumcision itself*. The *outward sign* of the presence of the Lord and his righteousness *within*, they made to take the place of that which it only signified. Circumcision was thus put in the place of Christ. And therefore in the nature of things, circumcision was looked upon and counted as the greatest of all things. And it was strictly logical that the rabbis should teach, as they did, that circumcision alone was "as great as all the other commandments;" and indeed that it was greater than creation itself, because God had created

heaven and earth in order that men might be circumcised. See Farrar's "Life and Work of Saint Paul," pp. 226, 428.

Again: The Lord gave his law — the ten commandments — *first* to give the knowledge of sin and cause it to "become exceeding sinful" that they might appreciate Christ, the Saviour from sin (Rom. 7: 13; 5: 20, 21); and *secondly*, to witness to the righteousness of God obtained without the law and by the faith of Jesus Christ. Rom. 3: 20-22. Therefore the tabernacle in which the law was preserved was called "the tabernacle of *witness*" (Acts 7: 44); the ark in which the law rested was "the ark of the *testimony*;" and the tables on which the law was written were called "the tables of the *testimony*." *Testimony* is the evidence which a *witness* gives; and therefore the ark of the testimony was the ark of *witness*, and the tables of the testimony were the tables of *witness*, as the tabernacle was the tabernacle of witness, and all because they held the law of God which was the witness to the righteousness of God which they were to obtain by faith in the mediation of him whom all the services of the tabernacle typified.

But they not having righteousness by faith of Christ, sought to obtain it by works of the law. Not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God, they went about to establish their own righteousness. Rom. 10: 3. Not having the presence of Christ in the heart to work the righteousness of God in the life and so fulfill the righteousness of the law in them, and seeking to accomplish righteousness themselves by the law, they perverted the law from the

purposes for which God gave it, to purposes of their own—purposes for which God never gave it and never intended it at all.

The ten commandments as men see them in the letter are but “the *form* of knowledge and of the truth”—the form of righteousness. Rom. 2: 20. He who looks at the law itself, and seeks to do it as he sees it, is seeking but a *form of righteousness* at the best. It is true that the law, even in the letter, is the *perfect* form of knowledge and of truth; but still it is thus only the form of it. And though a man conform perfectly to it as he sees it, still his service would be but a perfect formalism and he but a perfect formalist—such as was Saul of Tarsus. Phil. 3: 16.

But in Christ is the perfect *life* of the perfect form. As it is written, “The law was given by the hand of Moses; but the *reality* and grace was by the hand of Jesus Messiah.” John 1: 17 (Syriac). That is, while in the law as it is in the letter and as men see it, is the *form* of knowledge and truth, in Christ is the very *reality*. Finding him we find the very life of the law; for he is the living law itself. In him we find all the depth and meaning of the law as it is in truth—the very righteousness of God himself, which the law demands and which alone it will accept of us, but which it can never find in us till it finds Christ there. And finding him in us, it witnesses to the righteousness of God which we have in him.

Once more: God made a sacrifice for sinful man; and in this sacrifice, he gave the best that he had, the firstling of his flock, the best that he could possibly give. It was therefore perfectly fitting that he should teach sinful men who should rest their hope upon the great Sacrifice that God had made for them, that as a token of their appreciation of the fact that God has given the best that he had, they should offer in return the best that they have—the firstling of their flocks, and the firstfruits of their land.

This is the principle of the law of sacrifice of all times ancient and modern. And upon this principle, every offering is an expression of faith in God's sacrifice and of appreciation of it. Therefore, “*by faith* Abel offered” his sacrifice, the firstling of his flock, “*by which* he obtained witness that he was righteous.” Abel's was the righteousness which is of faith; and his sacrifice was but the response of faith in appreciation of the great sacrifice of Christ, in which he trusted. Thus it is ever in all true sacrifice; and whether that which is offered be little or much, it is equally meritorious; because the merit is not in it

at all, but *in him who is the spring of it*. And though it be little, and even the very least, yet it being the best that the worshiper has, and so the best that he *can* give, and this being given in appreciation of God's best gift which the true worshiper has already received by faith and by the faith of which alone he offers it, it is accepted equally with the greatest offering that could possibly be made from a greater abundance. Yea it is accepted *far in preference* to an offering of much greater amount, which is offered in its own merit and from a heart that appreciates not the wonderful sacrifice of the Son of God.

But unbelieving Israel, not having the righteousness which is of faith, and so not appreciating the great sacrifice that the heavenly Father has made, sought righteousness by virtue of *the offering itself*, and because of the merit of his offering of it. In this way of “sacrifice” he who made the largest offering had the most righteousness, and consequently upon the merit of what he had done could afford to boast over the poor soul who could do no more than to offer a pair of little birds that might be bought for less than a nickel. This kind of service and of offering, the Lord rebuked in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, and in calling attention to the poor widow with her two mites, who offered more than all the offerings of all the rich put together.

Thus was perverted every form of service, and everything which God had appointed to be the means of expression to a living faith, and which could not have any real meaning except by the living presence and power of Christ himself in the life. But not having him by living faith, his place was sought to be supplied with these things which were meaningless and lifeless without him. And that which his presence alone could accomplish—their separation from self and from the world—was sought to be wrought by themselves in a rigid conformity to these, in their hands, meaningless and lifeless forms.

And even this was not enough. For, not finding the peace and satisfaction of an accomplished righteousness in any of this, nor in all of it together, they heaped upon these things which the Lord had appointed for another purpose but which they had perverted to purposes of their own invention,—they heaped upon these things, ten thousand traditions, exactions, and hair-splitting distinctions of their own invention; and all, *all*, in a vain hope of attaining to righteousness. For the rabbis taught what was practically a confession of despair, that, “If but

one person could only for one day keep the whole law and not offend in one point—nay, if but one person could but keep that one point of the law which affected the due observance of the Sabbath—then the troubles of Israel would be ended, and the Messiah at last would come.”—*Farrar Id.*, p. 37. See also pp. 36, 83. What could possibly more fittingly describe a dead formalism than does this. Nevertheless that same dead formalism had fully supplanted living faith in the great majority of Israel in the time when Jesus came into the world.

And yet for all this conscious dearth in their own lives, there was still enough supposed merit to cause them to count themselves so much better than other people that all others were but as dogs in comparison. This, however, was but the easy consequence of their course from the beginning. For, having undertaken to separate themselves unto God from all the people that were on the face of the earth, while they were in fact *just like* all other people, the only way that they could do it was by *counting themselves better* than other people. And this altogether upon the merit of what *they* had done.

It is not so with those who are accounted righteous by the Lord upon a living faith freely exercised. For when the Lord counts a man righteous, he is actually righteous before God. And in this he is *really* better than other people; and by this very fact is separated from all the people of the world. But this is not because of any excellence of his own, nor of the “merit” of anything that he has done. It is altogether because of the excellence of the Lord and of what *he* has done. And the man for whom this has been done, knows that in himself he is no better than anybody else; but rather in the light of the righteousness of God that is freely imparted to him, he in the humility of true faith willingly counts others better than himself. Phil. 2:3.

This giving themselves great credit for what they themselves had done, and counting themselves better than all other people upon the merit of what they had done—this was at once to land them fully in the complete self-righteousness of Phariseism. In fact the word Pharisee means separated. And though in themselves they might be yet short of the mark, still in view of what they had, and what they had done, they in their own estimation could count themselves as so much better than all other people that there could not possibly be any basis of comparison. It seemed to them a perfectly

ruinous revolution to preach as the truth of God that “there is no respect of persons with God.”

And what of the actual life of such people, all this time?—O, it was only a life of injustice and oppression, malice and envy, variance and emulation, backbiting and talebearing, hypocrisy and meanness—binding heavy burdens and grievous to be borne and laying them on men’s shoulders, while they themselves would not move them with one of their fingers; devouring widows’ houses, and for a pretense making long prayers; giving “alms” and sounding a trumpet before them to get glory of men; profaning the temple, and yet very tenacious as to the gold of the temple; boasting of their great honor of the law, and through breaking the law dishonoring God; their hearts filled with murder, and their tongues crying loudly for the blood of One of their brethren, yet they could not cross the threshold of a Roman tribunal “lest they should be defiled!” Intense sticklers for the Sabbath, yet spending the holy day in spying treachery and conspiracy to murder.

What God thought and still thinks of all such ways as this, is shown plainly enough for our present purpose, in just two short passages of scripture. Here is his word to Israel—the ten tribes—while yet their day lingered:—

“I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. *Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs;* for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*” Amos 5:21-24.

And to Judah near the same time he said the same thing, in these words:—

“Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; Give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

“Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord:

though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The Lord himself had appointed these feast days, and solemn assemblies, these burnt offerings, meat offerings, and peace offerings; but now he says he hates them and will not accept them. Their fine songs, sung by their trained choirs, and accompanied with instruments of music, making a grand display,—all this that they got off for wonderfully fine *music*, he called "*noise*," and wanted it taken away.

He had never appointed any feast days, nor solemn assemblies, nor sacrifices, nor offerings, nor songs, for any such purpose as that for which these were being used. He had appointed all these as the means of worshipful expression of a living faith by which the Lord himself should abide in the heart and work righteousness in the life, so that in righteousness they *could* judge the fatherless and plead for the widow; and so that judgment *could* run as waters down, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

Songs sung in the pomp and stylish intonation of a vain show, is but "*noise*;" while the simple words, "Our Father" flowing from a heart touched by the power of a true and living faith and "spoken in sincerity by human lips, is *music*" which enters into the inclining ear (Ps. 116:2) of the heavenly Father and brings divine blessing in power to the soul.

This and this alone is what he had appointed these things for; and never, never to be used in the hollow pretense of a dead formalism to answer in righteousness for the iniquity of a carnal heart. Nothing but the washing away of the sins by the blood of the Lamb of God, and the purifying of the heart by living faith—nothing but this could ever make these things acceptable to him who appointed them.

Even this side of the cross of Christ, which itself should be the everlasting destruction of it, this same evil thing has exalted itself and has been the bane of the profession of Christianity everywhere. Very soon, unconverted men crept into the church and exalted themselves in the place of Christ. Not finding the living presence of Christ in the heart by living faith, they have ever since sought to have the forms of Christianity supply the lack of his presence which alone can give meaning and life to these forms.

In this system of perverseness, regeneration is through the form of baptism and even this by a mere sprinkling of a few drops of water; the real presence of Christ is in the form of the Lord's supper; the

hope of salvation is in being connected with a form of the church. And so on throughout the whole list of the forms of Christianity. Not content with thus perverting the divinely appointed forms of Christianity, they have heaped upon this, ten thousand inventions of their own, in penances, pilgrimages, traditions, and hair-splitting distinctions.

And, as of old and always with mere formalists, the life is simply and continually the manifestation of the works of the flesh—strife and contention; hypocrisy and iniquity; persecution, spying, treachery, and every evil work. *This is the papacy.*

This evil spirit of a dead formalism, however, has spread itself far beyond the bounds of the organized papacy. It is the bane of the profession of Christianity everywhere to-day; and even the profession of the Christianity of the third angel's message has not entirely escaped it. It is to be the world-wide prevailing evil of the last days clear up to the very coming of the Lord in glory in the clouds of heaven.

For, "this know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, *having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof*: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

This all-prevailing form of godliness without the power, and which even denies the power, is the dead formalism against which we are to fight the good fight of living faith. The living faith which is brought to the world in the third angel's message, is to save us from being swallowed up in this world-wide sea of a dead formalism. And having delivered us from this deadly evil, it is to work in us the loud cry of God's last call and special message of warning to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, crying mightily with a strong voice, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. They have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof: from such turn away.

Is this you individually to-day? Is yours a dead formalism, or a living faith? Have you the form of godliness without the power? or have you by living

faith the living presence and power of the living Saviour in the heart giving divine meaning, life, and joy to all the forms of worship and of service which Christ has appointed; and working the works of God and manifesting the fruits of the Spirit in all the life?

Which is it with you to-day? You can tell. O flee from a dead formalism, to living faith! Flee from *self*, the source of a dead formalism, to *Christ*, the Author of living faith. Receive with meekness the engrafted word, the faithful word, which is the channel of living faith, and which is able to save your souls.

Though except as the means of finding Christ the living Saviour *in the word*, and the living faith of him, even this word itself can be turned to a dead formalism now as it was of old when he was on the earth. He said to them then (Revised Version), "Ye search the Scriptures, because *ye think that in them ye have eternal life*; and these are they which

bear witness of me. And ye will not *come unto me that ye may have life.*" John 5:39, 40.

They thought to find eternal life in the Scriptures *without Christ*, that is, *by doing them themselves*. But "*this is the record*, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life *is in his Son*,"—*as we find him in the Scriptures*, and not in the words of the Scriptures without him. For they are they that testify of him. This is their object. Therefore, "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:11, 12.

Have you him? Have you him? He is the full and free gift of God to every soul. O receive him as he is, that he may abide with you and be in you forevermore.

"True godliness elevates the thoughts and actions; *then* the external forms of religion accord with the Christian's internal purity; then those ceremonies required in the service of God are not meaningless rites, like those of the hypocritical Pharisees."—"*Spirit of Prophecy*," Vol. II, p. 219.

ALONZO T. JONES.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION.

Reading for Sabbath, December 29.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS STEWARDS.

I SEEMED to be in an assembly of our people, and the subject to be presented was that of the opening of new fields, "the regions beyond," that have not yet heard the sound of the third angel's message. The standard of truth is to be uplifted in cities, towns, and villages. The truth is to be carried into the highways and hedges, and all classes are to hear the gospel. Earnest prayer was offered to God for his counsel and guidance. The spirit of the Lord was present, and deep solemnity rested upon all. The Spirit of the Lord was upon me, and I was deeply moved under its influence. I presented before those who were assembled the necessity of all our laborers working in unity, with one mind and one judgment.

A great work is to be accomplished in this country (Australia), and ministers and people will need to study carefully the principles of economy. Ministers and their wives are compelled to take leading positions; but they must be faithful sentinels over themselves, in order that imaginary wants shall not lead them to an extravagant expenditure of means. It will be necessary for every one connected with

the cause to practice strict economy, so that every penny that can be spared from their income, may be used to advance the work of God.

This testimony was presented before me in clear lines, and is applicable not only to Australia and New Zealand, but also to all other fields. The people of God are continually receiving of his rich bounties, and they should understand that all these rich favors come through Jesus Christ alone, who is the sin-bearer for our world. It was through self-denial and humiliation that Jesus Christ purchased our redemption; for he lived not to please himself. The self-denial of Christ calls for beneficent action on our part. If we represent the character of Christ, every particle of selfishness must be expelled from the soul. In carrying forward the work he gave to our hands, it will be necessary for us to give every jot and tittle of our means that we can spare. Poverty and distress in families will come to our knowledge, and afflicted and suffering ones will have to be relieved. We know very little of the human suffering that exists everywhere about us; but as we have opportunity, we should be ready to render immediate as-

sistance to those who are under a severe pressure. We should invest means in sending the gospel to the poor, and aiding those who have ventured by faith to take their position upon the platform of eternal truth, when by so doing they have placed themselves in an embarrassing situation. Where there are cases of special need, ministers must be prepared to relieve those who are in poverty for the truth's sake. There should not be a careless expenditure of means simply because they have it on hand, tying it up in some investment, so that it cannot be utilized when needed.

I have been perplexed to know how we may help those who are doing their best to live and keep the commandments of God. God calls upon us to bind about our wants, to have a genuine experience in daily self-denial. Although we may not be compelled to restrict our appetites, we should show that we do not live to eat, but eat to live. God demands a complete consecration of ourselves, soul, body, and spirit, to his service. Time is precious; strength is precious; no member of the family should be over-taxed because of unnecessary labor, and thus be disqualified to serve God and to keep his or her soul in the love of God. The Lord demands that we shall live simply. Our diet is not to consist of expensive food, or of unnecessary dishes, which require time and strength for preparation. It is profitable for us to consider the time in which we are living. We shall be called upon to engage in enterprises that will work for the salvation of the souls of men, women, and children. We must do this work in the spirit which Christ exercised in his mission, fulfilling the word, "Whosoever will come after me [follow in my footsteps], let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." So shall he be my disciple.

When the Lord sees that we are copying our Model in spirit and action, and doing our best for the advancement of the cause, then he will be our treasure of resources. New fields are to be entered, and if the work advances into these new fields, then every one who loves Jesus will have to act a part in personal self-denial. The work cannot be done by a few bearing the burden, and others gaining no experience in burden-bearing, and yet all partake of the favor of God. "By their fruits ye shall know them." If every one had a Christian experience after the self-denying order that Christ has enjoined, we should see far less selfish indulgence; we should see men and women giving themselves to the Lord, and working in their positions of trust as the Lord would have them, practicing the self-denial and self-sacrifice

which we see in our Redeemer; and this is the will of God concerning us.

We should heed the words of the apostle Paul when he said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Those who receive the mercies of God should have a disposition to respond to them. All things belong to God; all the good things which we enjoy are the results of divine love. God is the bountiful giver; in his large love he has given Jesus Christ, heaven's best gift, and how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? In his tender mercy and unspeakable love, he has not only provided for the wants of the soul, but has also not been forgetful to provide for the necessities of our bodies. He has made us his almoners, and has bestowed upon us his gifts, reserving tithes and offerings for the advancement of his work. He does not ask us to give these things because he could not get along without them; for he owns all things; but he reserves them for himself in order to give us, as his stewards, an opportunity to follow his example. He has given us the greatest gift he could possibly make, a gift of infinite value, so that it could not be said he could give a greater gift. In return, he asks that those who have been the recipients of such great love should render back to him a portion of that which he has given them, in order that "there may be meat in mine house." He pronounces the withholding of that which he has reserved, as robbery toward himself. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of hosts."

Those who do not return to the Lord a portion of his entrusted goods, will be written in the heavenly records as embezzlers of their Lord's property. The almost empty treasury of the Lord's house testifies against those who have been remiss in their duty in

paying to the Lord his own. They are not in a happy spiritual condition, and never can be, no matter what their assertions may profess. "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered."

The Lord would have every one acknowledge that he is the rightful owner of all the goods which he has lent us to trade upon. He says to us, Render back to me the tithes and gifts, and offerings, as a token of your loyalty to me, and of your dependence upon me, and I will bless you, and you shall be channels of blessing. Your gratitude offerings will be a token of your sense of obligation to me. The gratitude that ends simply in words, has no particular value; for faith is made perfect by works, and without works your profession of faith is of no worth. God is continually giving, and the human agent is continually receiving. When we become weary of returning to the Lord his own, his blessing will be withheld from us. As long as we are dependent upon God's bounty, our obligations to render gratitude offerings to him are upon us.

Time and strength and money have been frittered away simply for the gratification of taste, and yet all we have belongs to God, and is to be used for his glory. It is time that as families, and as a people, we should teach by precept and example how to be economical, self-denying, watchful and prayerful. We must lift the cross and follow Jesus. Our table should be a constant educator and enlightener to others, on account of its healthfulness and simplicity. We shall accomplish far more good in all lines of our work, if we live out the truth that we preach.

That which brings the highest satisfaction to heavenly intelligences, is engaging in the work of bringing the invitation of mercy to those for whom Christ has given his life. Those who claim to love God and keep his commandments are to be good and to do good. We are to manifest tact and discretion, and be sure that we make such an outlay of means as will work for the greatest good of those whom Christ has purchased with his own blood. The truth will not go to those who are nigh, and to those who are far off, unless every man, woman, and child shall practice strict economy in all their expenditures, and

consecrate that which they can save to the advancement of the work of God.

I appeal to all our brethren and sisters to bear in mind the words of Christ, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Jesus, the world's Redeemer, gave his precious life to save fallen man; every son and daughter of Adam is his purchased possession. He paid the infinite price, the ransom money in his own precious life, to redeem man; therefore he identifies his interest with suffering humanity. He requires every man to be interested for his fellow-man, making the word of God his standard of duty. With meekness and lowliness of heart we are to show reverence and love to him who hath bought us, giving his own life, that "whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." Then let love and tender regard toward our fellow-men be ever revealed, not merely in words, but in deeds.

The children of the heavenly King, should represent the character of the Ruler of the heavenly kingdom. They should cultivate unity and love for one another, each member of the royal family loyally representing the principles of the government of God. Jesus Christ was sent of God; in his character and life he represented every principle of the law of God. What are the two great principles of that law?—Love to God and love to our neighbor. We are to cherish a warm, deep, abiding interest in one another, an unfeigned respect for our brethren and sisters. We are none of us to set ourselves up as critics, to discern defects in those with whom we associate, and then engage in a work of cannibalism, tearing to pieces the reputation of those who may be more precious in the sight of God than we are. Evil-thinking and evil-speaking are a great offense in the sight of God, and those who do these things are not born of the Spirit, but of the flesh.

The sad thing in our churches to-day, is that Jesus is misrepresented in the character of those who profess to be his followers. Many claim to believe in and love Jesus, while they do neither. They advocate the law of God, but are transgressors of its precepts. The first four commandments require supreme love to God. Parents, children, wife, husband, houses, lands, or any other earthly treasure, whether of friends or property, are not to be loved selfishly, and thus become an idol to divert the

mind, the time, the service, from God. He that loves and serves mammon, cannot love and serve God supremely. When friends and relations are loved with inordinate affection, they are taking the place in the heart where God should be. "Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Here idolatry is plainly revealed, as existing in those who claim to worship God. The pure, refined, ennobling love is buried up by the love of carnal things. This the True Witness represents as a fearful loss in experience and character-building—the loss of the first love. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent." The True Witness sends forth this warning. Mercy and the love of God are the attributes of his throne. While claiming to be the subjects of the kingdom of God, and yet refusing to be converted from their selfish love, their stern, iron will, their own perverse ways, many are constantly bearing a false testimony of Jesus Christ.

I have been for a long time pressed under the burden of the fact that we are not elevating the standard as we should. New fields are continually opening, and the third angel's message must be proclaimed to all kindreds, nations, tongues, and peoples. We must not feel that we are compelled to hover over churches that have received the truth. We must not encourage the people to depend upon ministerial labor in order to preserve spiritual life. Every one who has received the truth must go to God for his individual self, and decide to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Those who have embraced the third angel's message must not make man their trust, and depend upon the ministers to make their experience for them.

Let every one do all in his power to help, both by his means and by his prayers, to carry the burden for souls for whom the ministers are laboring. Earnest prayer sent up to God for his blessing upon the laborers in the field, should follow the laborers as sharp sickles into the harvest field. When the peo-

ple thus pray for the work, they will not be selfish, and seek to have the ministers preaching to them who know the truth, but will say to the minister, "Go and carry the truth so precious to us, to others, and our prayers shall go with you." This will be a valuable experience to every member of the church.

Let the people of God have root in themselves because they are planted in Jesus Christ. There must be no strife for supremacy. Let every one seek God for himself, and know for himself that the truth of God is the sanctifier of soul, life, and character. Let all feel that it is their duty and privilege to speak those things in the church which will edify. No one should try to sermonize, but with hearts filled with the love of God, let each one have something to say that will not savor in the least of self-exaltation, of questions that will cause dissension; but let each one present lessons from the life of Christ, and represent none of self, but all of Jesus.

To every man is given his work. One man cannot do the work for which another man has been trained and educated. But the work of every man must begin at the heart, in the character, by surrendering the soul to God, and by co-operating with divine agencies. The root must be holy, or there will be no holy fruit. All are to be workers together with God, and self must not appear. The Lord has entrusted talent and capabilities to every individual, and those who are most highly favored with opportunities and privileges, are under the heaviest obligations to God. Those who are represented as having but one talent have their work to do. By diligent trading, not with pounds, but with pence, they are diligently to employ their ability, determined not to fail nor be discouraged. Those who faithfully trade upon their one talent will hear the gracious commendation given them with as full heartiness as those who have been gifted with many talents, and who wisely improve them, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." He who had but one talent, had an influence to exert, and his work was needed. In perfecting his own character, he was exerting an influence that helped to perfect the character of those who had larger responsibilities, who were in danger of building themselves up, and of neglecting some important little things, which that faithful man with his one talent was regarding with diligent care. By his diligence and unwearied, faithful

efforts, he gave lessons worthy of imitation to those who, from outward appearance, seemed to be greatly his superiors. Our various trusts are proportioned to our various abilities.

Christ can give his peace to those only who surrender their will and their way to his method and plans. Restless cravings and heart-burnings bring no joy, no happiness, but only sadness and misery

to the soul. He who cherishes them, views all things in a distorted light, and thinks that others who do not view matters as he does, do not appreciate his individual importance and worth. We may be complete in Jesus Christ only as we are emptied of self. When our life is hid with Christ in God, self is lost, submerged in the breadth, length, depth, and height of infinite love. Let the burden of every soul be to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

Mrs. E. G. WHITE.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE NEEDED BY THE CHURCH FOR THE WORK AND TRIALS OF THE LAST DAYS.

Reading for Sunday, December 30.

I AM aware that the subject introduced by the above heading is an important one, and pray earnestly that the Spirit of God may lead our minds as we engage in this study. There can be no question that we are now entering upon a most solemn and trying time; such, in many respects, as the church of God has not heretofore experienced. People that do not hold the views that we hold, nor expect the events that we are expecting, are profoundly impressed with an indefinable sense of the important significance of the signs of the times, and of what the near future may have in store for them. They grope in uncertainty as to what these events may be. With us it is not so. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Great light has shone on our path; we have been faithfully warned of the things that are coming. "Ye are all children of the light, and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober." What a privilege is ours, to walk in the light of the sacred word! There are many scriptures which fully describe this time and the dangers with which it is beset. In 2 Tim. 3:1-5 we are told that the last days will be perilous times, because men controlled by selfishness and guilty of grievous sins, will still have the forms of godliness. And those who profess to be God's peculiar people are in great danger of being led astray by the same error. Rev. 12:12 utters a woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because Satan has come down having great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time. In Rev. 13:14 we learn that the deceptive wonders that will be performed by satanic agencies, will be with very great power, and the consequence

is that those who do not receive the truth with the love of it, will be left to believe in a lie. 2 Thess. 2:12. In "Great Controversy," Vol. IV, edition 1884, page 440, we read the following statement concerning this time and our fitness to meet it:

"The time of trouble such as never was, is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality, but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal."

Thus both the Bible and the Testimony to the church, faithfully warn us of the coming perils; and not only this, but it is also stated that we are not prepared for it. Another statement from Sister White reads like this:—

"The more nearly we approach the closing scenes of the earth's history, the more pronounced will be the work of Satan; every species of deception will take the lead to divert the mind from God through Satan's devices."—*Letter to Battle Creek Church, July 20, 1894.*

Under these circumstances it behooves us to consider with the utmost care the education and experience necessary for us as individuals and as a people, that we may be able to meet the perils and to endure steadfastly unto the end, and be found among the overcomers at the end of the conflict.

It is plain that at the present time a most important and solemn work is to be accomplished, and in order that this may be done in a way to meet the mind of the Spirit of God, plans must be carefully laid, men and women must be fitted by experience, education, and training, to go forth into the whitened fields, and gather the wheat for the garner of God. The Lord's work is not to be done in a careless or haphazard way. "Cursed be he that doeth the

work of the Lord negligently." Jer. 48:10, *margin*.

But it is useless to talk about our experience or education if we are not in Christ, for no experience out of Christ can avail unto eternal life. Our education, to be profitable in the work of the Lord, must also be in Christ. Therefore to become a new creature in Christ Jesus, stands at the beginning of our experience. This new creature or new man is that which "after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." This new man, which is "renewed in knowledge," is "after the image of Him that created him." That is, "Christ in you the hope of glory." And he who is thus newly created can say: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20.

The word of the Lord to us at this time, is, "Arise shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Now, as never before, the power of God is to be bestowed upon his people, and manifested to the world. Now they are to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. This is what we are to do and to be, but it is what many of us are not yet. There is a tendency on the part of the church to conform to the world in conversation, in general appearance, in eating and drinking, dress and outward adorning, and self-gratification. While professing to believe that we are living on the verge of eternity, at the time when the retributive judgments of God are in the land, when the work of God for sinners is closing up, when, as stated by Sr. White in a late writing, the "angel of mercy is folding his wings, ready to depart," many of our people are as cold and indifferent to their situation and to the calls of God, as if it were not a matter that in the least concerned them. What a solemn time is ours! How can any one, believing the things that we profess to believe, remain so cold and formal and worldly as are many who have taken the name of Seventh-day Adventists. "Awake, awake, . . . shake thyself from the dust; . . . loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." Isa. 52:1, 2.

At different times, under some pointed testimony or some intense appeal, souls have begun to bestir themselves, have put forth an effort to awake, and seek God in earnest; but these efforts have been too spasmodic, too short-lived. In a little while those that seemed to awake, dropped back into the same stupor, and became more self-satisfied than before.

This is not the kind of awaking the Lord calls for. It is not an excitable, spasmodic feeling, but a deep settling into the work of God, a fixed purpose, a determination not to yield in the least to sin and the world. Who will now awake and sense the solemnity of our time? Who will break away from the power of sin and of the world? Who will yield himself to God without reserve, and thus afford an opportunity for the Lord to manifest his power and the love of Christ in the human instrumentality, who stands ready and waiting to come in, if we will but open our heart?

Having the spirit of Christ, we shall not be satisfied to be idle or indifferent in the Master's vineyard. The love of Christ will inspire us with the same interest and zeal that he manifested when he came to seek and save the lost. Christ said: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

In our preparation for work, the study of the word of God is of the first importance, for that is what we are to give to the people. Christ said: "I have given them my word." We are commanded to "preach the word." The reason for this is plain: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life;" and "the same shall judge you at the last day." The Bible has not been studied by us with that care that its great importance demands. The influences that prevail are such that will test every man's faith in the word of God. These influences are gaining strength continually, and as trials thicken and darkness becomes deeper, unbelief will do a fatal work with the masses. Our faith will be tested, and many of us who now believe the present truth are not prepared to meet the trial that is coming. We are not well grounded in the truth. Our knowledge of the Bible is too superficial. It is with many of our people a sort of general knowledge which is indefinite, indistinct, unreliable, and very scanty at that. Many depend altogether too much on what this or that one says. Some will even approve a position because it is presented by a certain person, or disapprove of it because it is presented by another person, without stopping to consider and weigh the matter for themselves. That is no ground for either accepting or rejecting a proposition. The only question that is pertinent is, Is it the word of God, or is it not? But how can we know if we are not familiar with the word? In "Testimony" No. 33, page 101, we read:—

"Most trying times are before us, and Satan clad in angel robes, will come to souls with his temptations as he came to Christ in the wilderness."

Christ did not stop to parley with Satan, but met every temptation with a decided "It is written." When Satan attempted to quote the Scripture in a garbled way, for this he will do, Christ met him with the decided answer, "It is written," giving the direct word of God in every instance. This is an all-important lesson for us at this time. Neither our people nor our ministry fully realize this. The Bible is treated and read too much like a common book, and not as it is indeed, the word of God. The Bible should not only be read, but *studied*. In our families more time should be taken for prayer, for study of the word of the Lord, and in holy meditation. How much evil would then be avoided, and how much good accomplished. Time should be given each day for the study of God's word. The whole family should have a part. It is often said that "we have not the time." You can just as well expect that you will be strong and thrive without eating, as you can expect to live a Christian life and grow in grace without taking due time every day for the study of the word of God. Says Christ: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." John 6:63. "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." Deut. 6:7-9. This is God's instruction to his people, and there never was a time when it was more important to give heed to it than now.

"In the religious life of every soul who is finally victorious, there will be scenes of terrible perplexity and trial, but his knowledge of the Scriptures will enable him to bring to mind the encouraging promises of God, which will comfort his heart and strengthen his faith in the power of the mighty One."—"*Testimony*," No. 33, p. 106.

"Intensity is taking possession of every earthly element. While a new life is being diffused and springing up from beneath, and taking fast hold of Satan's agencies preparatory to the last great conflict and struggle, at the same time a new life and power is descending from on high, and taking possession of God's people who are not dead, as many now are, in trespasses and sins."—"*Special Testimonies*," p. 39.

Will you, dear brethren and sisters, be energized by the power from on high, and be among the company that shall gain the experience necessary to stand in the day of trial?

The time and work also demand educated and trained workers and laborers. In this also we are at

fault. I again quote from "Testimony for the Church," No. 33, pp. 108-114.

"We have a work to do which but few realize. It is to carry the truth to all nations. There is a broad field for laborers in foreign lands, as well as in America. God calls for men who are devoted, pure, large-hearted, broad-minded, and humble, to enter these fields. How few have any sense of this great work! We must arouse, and work from a higher standpoint than we have hitherto done."

"We should have broader plans for the education of workers to give the message. Those who believe and know the truth, have done nobly in giving of their means to sustain its various enterprises, but there is a great lack of capable workers. It is not wise to be constantly expending means to open untried fields, while so little is done to prepare workers to occupy them. God's work must not be hindered for want of agents to execute it. He calls for cultivated men, who are Bible students, who love the truth that they open to others, and who bring it into their own lives and characters. We want men who love Jesus and cling to him, and who appreciate the infinite sacrifice made in behalf of fallen humanity. We want lips touched with holy fire. Hearts pure from the defilement of sin."

"We see the need of encouraging higher ideas of education, and of employing more trained men in the ministry. Those who do not obtain the right kind of education before they enter upon God's work, are not competent to accept this holy trust, and to carry forward the work of reformation. Yet all should continue their education after they engage in the work. They must have the word of God abiding in them. We need more cultivation, refinement, and nobility of soul in our labors. Such an improvement as this would show results in eternity."

"The work is now greatly retarded because men are carrying responsibilities for which they are unfitted. Shall this great want continue and increase? Shall these great responsibilities drop from the hands of old, experienced workers into the hands of those unable to manage them? Are we not neglecting a very important work by failing to educate and train our youth to fill positions of trust?"

"Let the workers be educated, but at the same time let them be meek and lowly of heart. Let us elevate the work to the highest possible standard, ever remembering that if we do our part, God will not fail to do his."

There is a sad dearth of this kind of laborers in all parts of the world. The way is open, the fields are white, and the Macedonian call is being heard from hundreds of places, and there is not a moment to lose.

It is a cause of gratitude that the subject of education is receiving some attention at present, but had we more fully appreciated these things in the past, we should now have been much better prepared to do the work before us. We should have had men and women ready to take the places that are now so urgently calling for efficient workers. It is sad that these things are so at this stage of the work, but let us sleep no longer. It is high time to awake out of sleep!

Not only ministers and Bible-workers are needed at this time, but we need a working church,—a church where there are workers, from the youngest to the eldest. "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." *Matt. 5: 14, 16.* The whole church should be under training for the work of the Lord. We have not improved our privileges in this respect as we ought to have done.

"Years ago I saw that our people were far behind in obtaining that knowledge which would qualify them for positions of trust in the cause. Every member of the church should put forth efforts to qualify himself to do work for the Master. To each has been appointed a work according to his ability."—"*Testimony*" *No. 33, p. 82.*

But many in our churches, even of those who have been connected with the work for a long time, are not prepared to do such work for the Master successfully, because they have not applied themselves to close study of God's word, nor taken an active part in the work, thus preparing themselves to bear greater responsibility. This is not to our credit or praise. It is now time that every man should stand at his post. We urge that in every church this matter receive consideration. Let arrangements be made for Bible study, and for instruction in the various lines of work. Every individual member of the church should become an efficient worker for the Lord. Why should not every member of the church be a trained worker for God? All are not called to the same work, but all are called to be "laborers together with God."

Our attention has been directed to the importance of families of believers moving to localities where the light has not gone, and there raising the standard of truth; or to localities where there may be a few struggling believers, and there to work for Christ, building up the cause of God. What a blessing would come to thousands of souls through devoted, consecrated, faithful Christian families moving to places in their own country or to other countries, where the truth has not been planted. The way is opening for this in Mexico, South America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and in other parts of the world.

The tendency to congregate in large bodies at the centers of our work, is not in accordance with God's plan. There is in it an element of selfishness and exclusiveness that is not pleasing to him. Some of our large churches are already suffering much

because of the great pressure that is forced upon them by so many people moving to them, while at the same time destitute fields are left to perish. As certain as the Lord has spoken to this people, there will come a time when there will be a scattering abroad. If we do not go voluntarily, we may be sent by persecution.

But in most cases there is need of preparation before our people can go out to instruct others. We urge that there be no further delay in making arrangements, wherever possible, for a systematic study of the Scriptures in every church and in every family, and that other lines of study and personal work be taken up when consistent, such as will fit and qualify our brethren and sisters for efficient work in other fields to which the providence of God is calling them. And there is the subject of Christian temperance and the laws of health. God has given much light on this subject, and he has a purpose in this, and we cannot afford to be indifferent and remain in ignorance concerning it.

But we need not specify further. We have been called to a solemn work, and great responsibilities rest upon us. We must obtain a deeper experience in the work of God. We must obtain a better fitting up for the work that we are called to do; and we must put forth more decided efforts and follow better matured plans for carrying God's message for this time to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. For this purpose men and means are needed, and they should be forthcoming; and the nature of our time and work is such that not a moment should be lost.

We would again call attention to the matter of contributions. We know that all our people are interested in having the "gospel of the kingdom" preached in all the world. God is not dependent upon our efforts, to bring this about; but it is, nevertheless, a part of the divine plan that we should be co-workers with him, and loyally support his work by contributing of our means for its necessities. And now we urge all to be liberal in their donations on this occasion. Give freely, give cheerfully; for this is pleasing to the Lord.

May this week of prayer be the beginning of a deeper experience in the things of God, and of greater earnestness and efficiency in his cause. And soon we shall hear from the Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

O. A. OLSEN.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

THE season for another week of prayer has arrived. These occasions have been fraught with great blessings in the past, and the present one should be no exception. In the past we have been in great need of God's blessing. With every year that passes we are so much nearer the final consummation. The times, too, are becoming more and more trying. The past year has been an eventful one. It is very apparent that the judgments of God are in the land. How solemn to think that God's restraining power is already being taken from the earth. Truly we should awake and seek God with an earnestness commensurate with the importance of this time.

TO MINISTERS, CHURCH ELDERS, AND LEADERS.

Much depends upon those who are called to lead the meetings during this important week, and therefore they need to seek God for a preparation and an experience that will enable them so to conduct the services that the most good possible may result. It would be well if the elder of the church and other prominent brethren and sisters could have meetings for prayer and consultation, before the week of prayer begins. In these preparatory meetings they could consider and make arrangements for the meetings during the week of prayer. The needs of the church should be carefully considered. Are any laboring under discouragement? Have any, for any reason, become careless or indifferent? Are any afflicted and in need of special care? All these should be looked after.

The week of prayer should also be so arranged that the children and youth can be benefited thereby. They need the blessing of God as well as the older ones. Arrangements for general attendance should also be made, and the time and place of the meetings so arranged as to accommodate all to the best advantage.

THE NUMBER OF MEETINGS EACH DAY.

As in former years, the number of meetings must be arranged according to circumstances. Where a minister is present to take the lead in the services, we would advise that arrangements be made for as many meetings as can consistently be held. But there should be at least one meeting each day, when the address prepared for the occasion should be read, the meeting being held at a time when the largest number of our brethren and sisters can be present.

MANNER OF CONDUCTING THE SERVICE.

We would advise that the meeting, when the subject for the day is to be taken up, be opened by singing and a season of prayer, in which as many may take part as feel free to do so; the more, the better. After the reading is over, it would be well to give opportunity for a social meeting, in which all the brethren and sisters can feel free to take part. Care should be taken that the meeting does not drag or hold too long.

PERSONAL WORK.

Personal work must be done for those who need help. No leader should go through the meetings without knowing how those attending are standing. Let those who know the forgiving power of the Lord be enlisted to talk with

the discouraged, and those who have not the knowledge of their acceptance with God. Not one should go through the meetings with only an old experience. We must now have a new and living experience.

SELECTION OF READERS AND PREPARATION FOR THEIR WORK.

Great care should be exercised in choosing persons to read the matter prepared for the different meetings. They should be appointed a sufficient length of time beforehand to give them opportunity to make careful and prayerful preparation for their duties. While it is necessary for them to be good readers, in the common acceptance of the term, it is also necessary that they should be in condition spiritually to enter into the full meaning of the thoughts designed to be conveyed in the readings. They cannot do this unless they have the spiritual experience represented in the readings themselves. It would be impossible for them to do their work effectively without tenderness of heart and a keen appreciation of the importance of the occasion.

TO ISOLATED READERS.

The General Conference has taken great pains to supply isolated friends of the cause with the readings as far as their addresses could be obtained. It is probable that nearly all of such will not have the opportunity of meeting in companies where regular services are held. To these we would suggest that they set apart a season of devotion every day, and at such time take up the reading for the day and give it careful and prayerful study; and in that way they will obtain, in a measure, the same blessing they would obtain were they privileged to meet with a congregation. God will meet with them in their lonely situation, as well as with those permitted to engage in the assemblies of our people.

THE ANNUAL OFFERING.

We suggest Sunday, December 30, as the most appropriate date for making the offerings. They should be made in connection with the principal meeting of the day, when it is expected the largest number will be present. It is important that the brethren and sisters understand this appointment early in the week of prayer, that they may have ample time to make arrangements for their offerings. We shall not send out envelopes for use in the collection of the gifts, as has been done in some former years; but let each church arrange for this matter as may seem most appropriate for the occasion.

We are in need of large contributions. A great work is before us, and we must have funds with which to carry it forward; and now, as we expect to reap bountifully, let us sow bountifully. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you."

The contributions of our churches and companies should be forwarded to the secretary of the State tract society as soon as gathered. Those not meeting in companies should also send their contributions to the secretary of their State tract society, when they are living within the bounds of organized Conferences; otherwise they should send directly to W. H. Edwards, care of Review and Herald, Battle Creek, Michigan.

O. A. OTSEN,

President General Conference.