

RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH CHRIST.



ANKIND was made so helpless by sin that the Lord said, "They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."¹ Paul expresses it, "There is none righteous, no, not one."²

Righteousness is right doing, or right being. A person must be right in his heart and right in his living to be righteous. But all people have sinned, because there is evil in their very nature. This nature is called the carnal mind, and we read that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."³ No man can be righteous while his mind is given to the flesh, and sin. Therefore the carnal mind must be taken away from the sinner before he can become righteous.

Jesus saw man's helpless condition, and came from heaven to save him from sin and enable him to live in righteousness.

¹ Ps. 14:3.

² Rom. 3:10.

³ Chapter 8:7.

The law of God is good and spiritual,⁴ but man is too weak and full of sin to obey it until he becomes a new creature. Man can not change his own heart, and the law without Christ can only condemn him; "for by the law is the knowledge of sin."⁵ Had it been possible for the sinner to make himself righteous, he could have saved himself without the blood of Christ being shed for him. The person who tries of himself to be righteous, finds something in his nature which compels him to say, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Again he says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Then he cries out in bitterness, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"⁶

Sin is a body of death so strong that no man can deliver himself from its power. Yet Satan wishes man to think that, if he is a sinner at all, he can get free from sin without Christ. The deceiver would have men believe they are able to keep the commandments of God in themselves, because he does not want them to seek the Lord for strength. But the simple fact is that man is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and helpless, and the Lord desires that man shall learn this. God desires him to feel as David felt when he said, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." When he learned his true condition he prayed, "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me."⁷ It is when man gives up all to the Lord that he gets all he needs in Christ. For Christ "is made unto us wisdom,

⁴ Rom. 7: 12, 14.

⁵ Chapter 3: 19, 20.

⁶ Chapter 7: 19-24.

⁷ Ps. 40: 12, 13.

and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”⁸ Then where is our righteousness?—It is in Jesus, for the prophet says, “This is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”⁹

The law of God told man to do right, but he failed; then our Saviour came and obeyed for him. The law said that he should die, because he had not been righteous, but Christ died in his place. Man was condemned because he had no righteousness; but through faith he receives the righteousness of Christ. “For He [the Father] hath made Him [the Son] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”¹⁰ Jesus had no sin of His own, but He took upon Him the sins of men. And men had no righteousness of their own, so Jesus gave them His. The prophet says, “Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.”¹¹ It was the weight of our sins on Jesus that made Him sweat blood in the garden. Our sins caused His death on the cross. “His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.”¹²

Jesus came to earth, and lived a life of suffering and sorrow, and then died on the cross, because He loved even the lowest of helpless sinners. “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” And again it is written, “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”¹³ We need not be lost while the Lord is so ready to save us. Even the dying for our sins has been done; the suffering has been borne to settle for our condemnation, and the law has been obeyed by Jesus in every part.

⁸ 1 Cor. 1 : 30.

⁹ Jer. 23 : 6.

¹⁰ 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

¹¹ Isa. 53 : 4.

¹² 1 Peter 2 : 24.

¹³ Rom. 5 : 6, 8.

But how can a sinner get all this righteousness? The blessed thought is that he can exchange his sins for it all. It is free to every one who will take it as a gift. And there is also life with the righteousness, for the apostle says, "They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Righteousness is given when a person wholly believes God's Word. For the scripture says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." And it also teaches that when the ungodly person believes, his faith is counted for righteousness. "For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness."¹⁴ The reason why his faith was counted to him for righteousness was because he believed every word that God said, without even a doubt. He actually believed that God would do every thing He had promised. He came into perfect harmony with God. "And therefore it [the faith] was imputed to him for righteousness."¹⁵

Abraham believed all the words of God, and took them into his heart. Thus the Word of God became the guide of Abraham's mind; that is, the mind of God was in Abraham's faith. Therefore his faith could properly be counted for righteousness; and it was so counted because that faith contained the Word of God, which is righteousness itself. To receive the Word of God is to receive Christ and His righteousness. The faith of Abraham will accept and receive every Word of God. And if we thus believe it with all the heart, the righteous mind of Christ will be in us, and our faith will be counted for righteousness.

The Lord works to take every stain of sin away from His children, therefore He washes them clean, and makes their

¹⁴ Rom. 4 : 3, 5, 9.

¹⁵ Verse 22.

robes of character pure and white, in the blood of the Lamb.¹⁶ He represents man's works as filthy clothing, and the righteousness of Christ as white raiment. And He asks the sinner to give up his filthy rags, and be clothed in the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness. The prophet sang of this righteous robe, saying, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall



"My soul shall be joyful in my God. . . . He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."¹⁷

This robe of righteousness is the perfect life which Jesus lived, which is counted as ours when we believe. Christ's own life and righteousness, as He now is, lives in His children, so that all may be as Paul said of himself, "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."¹⁸ It was Christ's Spirit and life in Paul that enabled him to obey the commandments of God. And that was how Jesus was Paul's righteousness.

As soon as the sinner lets go of his own ways and accepts Jesus as his Saviour, he becomes a child of God, and begins to

¹⁶ Rev. 7 : 14.

¹⁷ Isa. 61 : 10.

¹⁸ Gal. 2 : 20.

live the righteousness of Christ. He does not have to make himself righteous by his good works, for he is given the mind and character of Christ, and all the riches and righteousness of heaven become his. The Lord is anxious to have him believe it, too, with all his heart. He is not pleased at having His children sad and discouraged, for "light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds."

David, when talking with the Redeemer, said, "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord." The gates are now open, and Jesus is calling upon all to enter in. He says: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."¹⁹

Blessed invitation! the Saviour calling His laboring people to come and receive rest in Him. The sinner, with his heavy load of guilt, is asked to put his burden of sorrow on Christ. The poor of all classes can come and receive a crown and kingdom. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake can lay their shame on Him, who tenderly shares it with them. For the Son of God is in every jail, and court, and prison, and furnace, where His children are afflicted, to bear the reproach with them. All that come, rich and poor, find sweet rest in Jesus. Although the Redeemer is now the joy of all heaven, yet He lives with the humble, and still loves the poor and needy. He has not forgotten how weary He used to be when He worked at the carpenter's trade in Nazareth, or when He

¹⁹ Matt. 11: 28-30.

walked over the valleys and mountains of Judea and Galilee seeking to save the lost.

Man's sin may be ever so great, yet the righteousness of Christ can take it all away. In Him is found the law fulfilled by implicit obedience, and we are complete in Him.²⁰ None need be afraid to stand before the judgment seat in the righteousness of Christ, because the righteousness of heaven itself is given to the sinner when he is converted. To the sinner who will take the gift it is said, "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."²¹ If the sinner's heart is dark, will he not be ready to have it made light? If his sins are red as blood, does he not want them made whiter than snow?

Let the sinner confess his wickedness to the Lord, and then believe that Christ's righteousness is given him at that moment. He does not have to do something to be forgiven and made righteous, because righteousness is "by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference."²² All good is in Christ, and must come to us from Him continually. He says, "Without Me ye can do nothing."²³ It is trust in God's promises which gives strength. It is resting in His Word which gives peace. The prophet says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous 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."²⁴

Pardon is abundant, and there should be no doubting it. The Lord is not pleased with doubts; He wants faith. Unbelief

²⁰ Col. 2:9, 10.

²² Rom. 3:22.

²³ John 15:5.

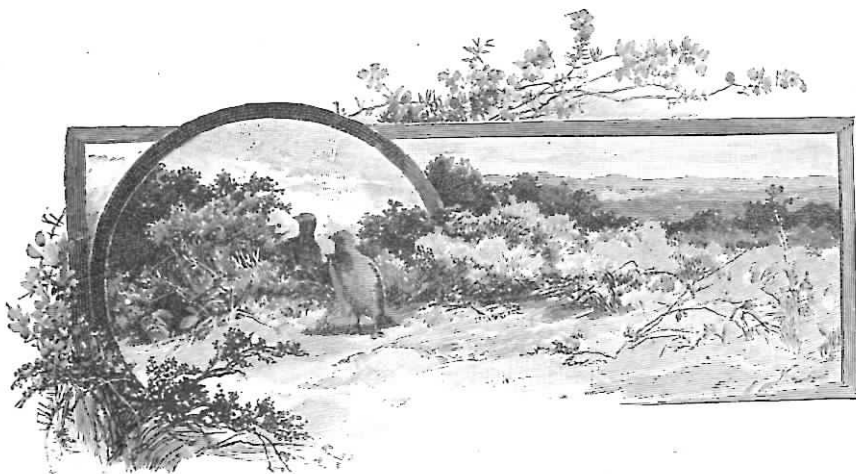
²¹ Isa. 1:18.

²⁴ Isa. 55:7.

is sin. God can not be worshiped by our doubts, neither can we grow strong on them. Not one can gain a victory through doubts. All must learn by faith and grow strong in believing.



Bedouin Women and Children.



THE CHURCH AND ITS ENEMIES.

THE churches organized by the apostles and early Christians were taught to obey the commandments of God and to live after the example of Christ. Jesus had commissioned His disciples to teach all nations "to observe all things whatsoever" He had commanded them; and had promised to be with them always, "even unto the end of the world."¹ He had said: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing."² John, who wrote this saying of Christ, said to the churches, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."³ Paul says, "We are members of His body, and of His flesh, and of His bones."⁴ "Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body."⁵

¹Matt. 28:30.

²John 15:5.

³1 John 2:6.

⁴Eph. 5:30.

⁵Verse 23.

The thoughts of the Christian are continually directed to the Saviour in all the teaching of the apostles. Jesus was to be the very life and power of His people. It is written, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught."⁶

There is to be a constant looking to Jesus. He is to all the Author and Finisher of their faith. He is their sunshine, their light, their joy, their wisdom, their strength, their righteousness, and their shield. His people are to be united in heart to Him; and His Spirit and love are to dwell in them. To them He says: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. . . . Because I live, ye shall live also."⁷ Christ dwells by His Spirit with His people so fully that Paul said, "Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."⁸ Christ was made the head, the foundation, and the chief corner-stone of the church. "He is the head of the body, the church,"⁹ and is Himself the "chief corner-stone."¹⁰ "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."¹¹ Neither the pope of Rome, nor Mahomet, nor any other man, or set of men, is the head of the church. Christ is head of His own church, and also head of every man in the church. Says the apostle, "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ."¹²

In the lifetime of the apostles thousands were converted who walked faithfully in the footsteps of Jesus. The work spread so rapidly among the nations that Satan became aroused lest his kingdom should be destroyed. Persecution therefore began.

⁶ Col. 2:6, 7.

⁷ John 14:18, 19.

⁸ Gal. 2:20.

⁹ Col. 1:18.

¹⁰ Eph. 2:20.

¹¹ 1 Cor. 3:11.

¹² Chapter 11:3.

Christians must decide to give up their faith in Christ or to suffer death. Many died for their faith. But persecution only made God's people more faithful. The same spirit which Christ had manifested at His crucifixion dwelt with His suffering people, and it gave them victory even in their death. And in His Word to us Christ says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."¹³ And again: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven."¹⁴ But the more the Christians were persecuted and slain, the farther was Christianity spread abroad. The followers of Jesus were often filled with joy, and would sing praises, when being tortured or imprisoned; and their joy would reach other hearts, and cause them also to accept Christ.

After a while Satan discovered that persecution only hindered his own cause, so he decided to change his manner of action. He then ceased to be so cruel, and worked to bring worldly-minded people into the church. Many idolaters then professed to believe in Jesus, and these were baptized and united with the church. They were not Christians, but simply unconverted church-members. The more such professors were added to the church, the weaker it became. Many heathen who were rich and proud professed to believe in Christ, and were called Christians. They brought much of their idolatry with them into the church. By them many plain, simple truths of the Gospel were rejected, and heathen practises were introduced in their place. Their influence was exceedingly bad in the church, because many followed their evil ways.

¹³ Rev. 2: 10.¹⁴ Matt. 5: 11, 12.

Paul, in warning against this danger to the church, said: "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."¹⁵ Peter also wrote to the churches of this same thing, saying: "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."¹⁶ Those who are far away from God are so filled with selfishness that they want others to follow *them*, and they persecute all who differ from their ways. They do not know the law of God themselves, and can not understand it in others.

The heathen generally fear that the gods which they worship are angry with them, and that some painful thing must be done to pacify them. For this reason they punish themselves with stripes, or bruises, or by other painful afflictions, thinking that such things will cause their gods to pity them. The heathen hopes for a blessing from his gods through pity. The true Christian simply trusts in the love of God, and his heart is filled with joy.

The heathen have been taught to pray to the dead, because they believe the spirits of the departed can intercede with the gods for them. This manner of prayer was brought into the church by the unconverted heathen who professed to believe in Christ. It was called "the invocation of the saints." The same custom is kept up to this day. Some pray to Peter, and some to Paul; but many more pray to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

¹⁵ Acts 20 : 29, 30.

¹⁶ 2 Peter 2 : 1, 2.

All such prayer is a denial of the Lord Jesus, who has bought us with His own precious blood. His is the only name given under heaven by which man can be saved.¹⁷ But Satan had determined on turning Christians away from the Word of God, and from their trust in the Saviour; so a constant effort was made to have heathen customs practised by the church.

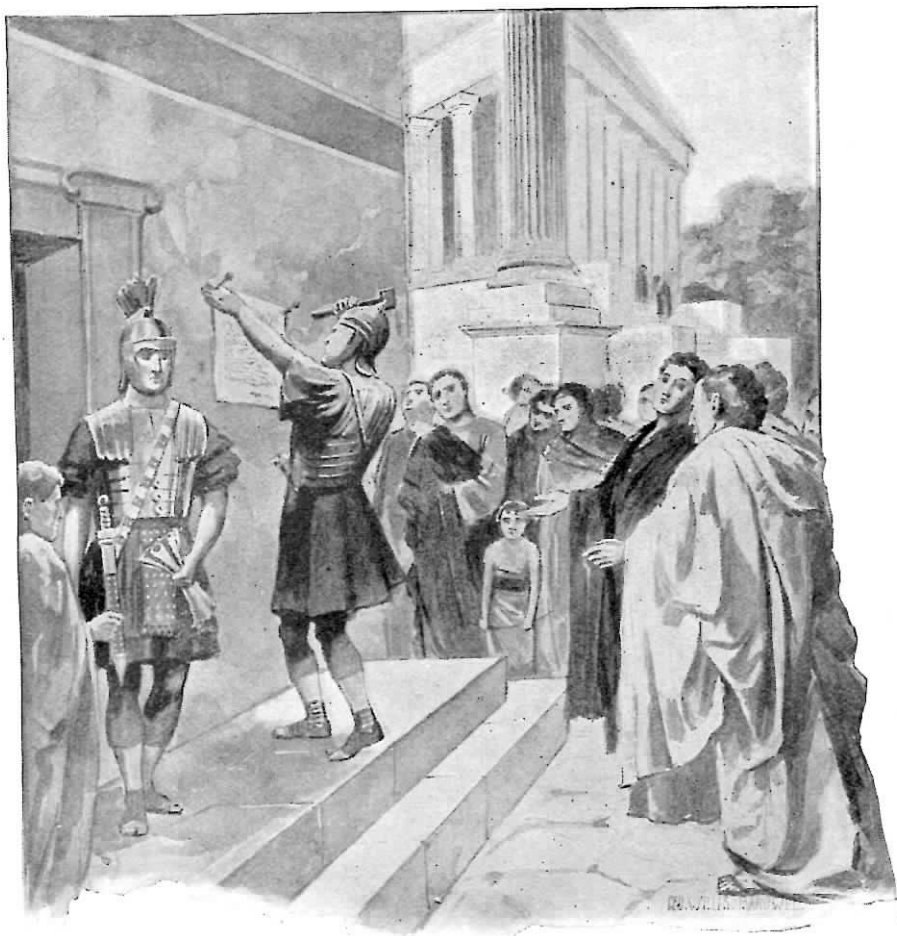
There were men in those times who gathered bones and other relics from the tombs of the dead and elsewhere, and sold them to superstitious believers. It was taught by the priests that there was some blessed charm about these relics which would keep off evil spirits, and do many wonderful things for those who possessed them. The relics were sought for, while the hearts of the people were filled with blindness, superstition, and unbelief.

Rules were established on purpose to suit the carnal mind, in order that greater numbers might be brought into the church. For this cause sprinkling and pouring were introduced to take the place of baptism. There were those who objected to being immersed, or buried in the water, as taught and practised by the apostles, and these were sprinkled, or water was poured upon them, as best suited their notion.

That still greater numbers might be counted, children, and even infants, were sprinkled and recorded as members. These were too young to either choose or believe for themselves; and thousands of them grew up without any Christian experience. So the church was crowded with the unconverted.

Many who professed Christianity among the Gentiles had been worshipers of the sun, and had regarded the Sunday, or the first day of the week, as their holiday. The worldly-minded

¹⁷ Acts 4 : 12.



The publishing of the "Sunday Edict" by Constantine—a messenger of the empire affixing to the wall of a public building the proclamation.

NOTE.—"These edicts were sent abroad to the different cities of the empire in the form of circular letters and posted upon the walls of these cities, to be read by the public. The original was often written in the emperor's own hand, and from this translated into the different tongues of the empire."

among them still desired to retain their Sunday festival, but did not love the Lord's Sabbath, which came upon the seventh day of the week. Christ had observed the Bible Sabbath while He was upon the earth,¹⁸ and the disciples of Christ kept "the Sabbath according to the commandment;"¹⁹ but here was a class in the church who refused to obey this commandment. Sunday was not observed in the church during the lifetime of the apostles. Sir William Domville says: "Centuries of the Christian era passed away before the Sunday was observed by the Christian church as a sabbath. History does not furnish us with a single proof or indication that it was at any time so observed previous to the sabbatical edict of Constantine."

Constantine was an emperor of Rome, who made an edict or law for Sunday-keeping, and it was published in the year A. D. 321. It said: "Let all the judges and townspeople rest on the venerable day of the sun; but let those who are situated in the country freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture, because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines; lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by heaven. Given the seventh day of March." Constantine was a heathen when he made this law; but when he professed to believe in the Christian religion he still allowed it to remain in force.

Neander, a church historian, in writing on the subject, says: "The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intention of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church to transfer the

¹⁸ Luke 4: 16.

¹⁹ Chapter 23: 56.

law of the Sabbath to Sunday." It was the emperors and princes of the Roman Empire and the bishops and priests of the Roman Church who made this change. They did it to please the heathen teachers, and the unconverted members in the church of those times. The Roman Catholic writers claim that their church made the change from Sabbath to Sunday.

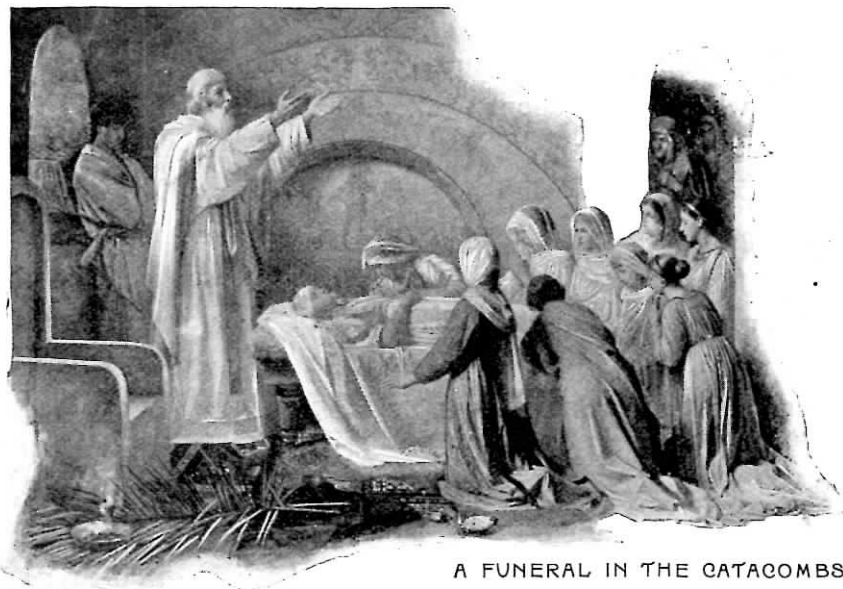
In a Catholic book called "The Abridgment of Christian Doctrine," we find this question and answer: "How prove you that the church hath power to command fasts and holy days?" *Ans.*—By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday." Most of their books on doctrine claim the same thing. The Bible, in speaking of the power that should think to make the change, says, "He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law."²⁰ That church thought itself able to take the Sabbath out of the law of the Most High, and place in its stead the Sunday, which rested only upon the authority of man. In doing this it put itself in the place of God, and asked all the world to bow at its feet. Thus the scripture was fulfilled which speaks of a power called "the man of sin," "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."²¹

But what had become of the church of Christ? There was a very large organization of worldly-minded people who called themselves "the church," but the Spirit of Christ was not found there. The humble, tender disposition of the Saviour had departed; and those who ruled that people were the "grievous wolves" of whom Paul wrote. They had come in to devour the flock.

²⁰ Dan. 7:25, R. V.

²¹ 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.

This body of people, assuming to be the church of Christ, took control of the Roman Empire, and ruled over the kingdoms of the earth. It had religious laws made to suit itself, and compelled kings and princes to enforce these laws upon the people. This unholy course brought fiery trials upon those who were unwilling to obey the dictates of the Roman Church.



A FUNERAL IN THE CATACOMBS.

"They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."

There were three things which might be done in those times. The first was to give up faith in Christ and obey the priests of Rome; the second was to refuse this obedience, and be put to death; the third was to hide away in the wilderness or among the mountains and in the caves of the earth, and take one's chances for life.

Many chose to leave their homes and flee to the friendly

wilderness and hills for protection. The Lord had said by His prophet, "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth."²² They truly "were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; . . . they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."²³

† These afflictions continued for more than a thousand years, during which time millions of God's servants were slain by their persecutors. Many were destroyed by the sword, some were put to death by strangling, and others were starved in dungeons. Great numbers were burned at the stake. Thousands perished from cold and nakedness, because they chose to die in that manner rather than to be taken by their persecutors to suffer a more cruel death. But those who passed through these fiery trials gained the victory over the enemy by meekly dying for the truth. Said Jesus, "Whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it."²⁴ John had written by inspiration, "They overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."²⁵

✕ For hundreds of years an effort was made to keep the Scriptures away from the common people, and even educated men seldom saw the Bible. The priests of Rome conducted their services in the Latin language, which was not understood by many who heard them. But the Lord had ordered the Gospel to be preached in all the world and to every creature,²⁶ and therefore a change had to take place.

²² Eze. 34 : 6.

²³ Heb. 11 : 37, 38.

²⁴ Mark 8 : 35.

²⁵ Rev. 12 : 11.

²⁶ Mark 16 : 15.

A man named John Wycliffe, who lived in England over five hundred years ago, translated the Scriptures into the English language. His death occurred in A. D. 1384; but he had started a work, which has gone forward, gaining strength, for more than five centuries. Wycliffe has been called the "morning star of the Reformation." The priests had tried to have the sentence of death passed upon him while he was engaged in his work, and forty years after he was dead they dug up his body and burned his bones, as a testimony of their condemnation of his work.

John Huss, a Bohemian, born in A. D. 1370, accepted the teachings of Wycliffe. He preached the Word of God directly to the people, and spoke against the wickedness of the popes and the bishops of those times. His writings and public labors condemned the sins of the great men of the professed church, and this caused them to demand his arrest. When brought to trial he stood firmly by the teachings of his life. Because of his refusal to change his course of work, or to confess that he had been in error, he was burned at the stake in A. D. 1415. In preparing him for death, his enemies placed upon his head a crown with frightful pictures of demons painted upon it. He received it, saying, "Most joyfully will I wear this crown of shame for Thy sake, O Lord Jesus, who for me didst wear a crown of thorns." In the flames he sang till his voice was silenced in death. When his body was consumed, his ashes, and the ground upon which they lay, were gathered up and thrown into the river Rhine. Jerome, a companion in labor with Huss, was also condemned and burned at the stake the following year.

About one hundred years after Huss and Jerome were

burned, great numbers of men were raised up to publish abroad the Word of God, and to defend its truth. They were found in Germany, England, France, Switzerland, Scotland, Holland, and other countries at the same time. Perhaps Martin Luther, of Germany, was the ablest and boldest of them all; but Ulric Zwingli, of Switzerland, William Tyndale, of England, John



"Most joyfully will I wear this crown of shame for Thy sake, O Lord Jesus, who for me didst wear a crown of thorns."

Knox, of Scotland, Louis Berquin, of France, and many others, did battle nobly for the same good cause.

Luther was the first to translate the Scriptures into the German language. He had been in school many years before he knew of the entire Bible. But finding a Latin copy of it in a library, he would read, and then exclaim, "Oh, if God would give me such a book as this!" He became so deeply interested in the teaching of God's Word that he felt himself called upon

to translate and publish it in a language which his countrymen could read.

God sustained Luther in the work which he had undertaken. His influence for good was felt over all the Christian world. But no man ever met with greater opposition in any cause than Luther met from the Roman Catholic Church. At one time he was condemned by them to die for his faith, yet Providence kept the enemy from taking his life, and at last he died in peace in his own bed at Eisleben.

While Luther was giving the Bible to the people in the German language, William Tyndale was translating it into the English tongue. He carried his work of translation to greater perfection than Wycliffe had done. And as the art of printing books was in use at this time, copies of God's Word were rapidly multiplied, and put into circulation. The enemy cut the life of Tyndale short by strangling him in A. D. 1536, but man could not stop his work. That is yet going forward, in its influence upon others, which resulted in our common version.

At the same time that the Word of God was being published in the German and English tongues, Lefevre was translating it into the French, and scattering it among the people, to be read and obeyed. The work of reform was begun in Holland even before it succeeded in Germany; but the preaching and writings of Luther, and the bold stand which he took for the Word of God, encouraged men in all the nations of Europe to do the same thing. Thus from the commencement of Luther's work, in about A. D. 1517, the true Gospel light began to break anew upon the nations of the earth. Many persecutions and drawbacks have been met, which were designed to check it; but it has gone forward, and it must go until it has done its work.



JESUS IS COMING AGAIN.

THROUGH every age since Adam fell men have been promised a glorious future. In all these years God's people have hoped for the time when their lost Paradise would be restored. But before the redeemed can see that glad day, Jesus must come again.

Enoch, of the seventh generation from Adam, exclaimed, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints."¹ David sang, "He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth."² Job expressed his hope by saying, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."³ The joy of a multitude is told in these glad words: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."⁴ To His disciples Jesus said, "The Son of man

¹ Jude 14.

² Ps. 96: 13.

³ Job 19: 25.

⁴ Isa. 25: 9.

shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him."⁵ The angels who attended at Christ's ascension said to His disciples, as He was passing from their sight, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."⁶

To come from heaven in the same manner in which He went to heaven, would be to descend in a cloud, while people behold Him. So it is said, "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."⁷



"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him."

"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him."⁸ *It is His second coming to which the Christian is looking in hope.* "And unto them which look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."⁹ "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."¹⁰

⁵ Matt. 25:31.

⁶ Acts 1:11.

⁷ Matt. 24:30.

⁸ Rev. 1:7.

⁹ Heb. 9:28.

¹⁰ Titus 2:13.

Then the people of God will see, with their own eyes, Him who died for them. As stated by John, "We shall see Him as He is." Job wrote, "I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." But when the redeemed shall see Him literally as He is, they will hear Him with His own voice tell the sweet story of His love. And who does not want to hear the story told?

Christ will then crown His people. Said Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."¹¹ Peter says, "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."¹²

When Jesus comes again, His children will receive their reward in glory. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."¹³ It has ever been the desire of Christ to dwell with His people; and this He will do when they are glorified.

The evidences that Christ is coming soon are many. In speaking of those things which should prove the event to be nigh at hand, Jesus said, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars."¹⁴ Following the signs in the heavens, there were others to appear on the earth: "Distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. . . . And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."¹⁵

¹¹ 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

¹² 1 Peter 5:4.

¹³ Col. 3:4.

¹⁴ Luke 21:25.

¹⁵ Verses 25-27.

Christians are told to rejoice because the Saviour's coming is nigh at hand. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."¹⁶ It is an event to be desired by His people, because His coming is the set time to bless Zion. In the



"People left their work in the field; travelers stopped."

Gospel by Mark the signs of Christ's coming are described in these words: "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the

powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and glory."¹⁷

The first sign here mentioned, the darkening of the sun, was fulfilled May 19, 1780. Rev. Wm. Potter, writing in regard to this event, said of the darkness: "People left their work in the field; travelers stopped; schools broke up at eleven o'clock; people lighted candles at noonday; and the fire shone as at night. A great part of the night was also singularly dark." Webster's Dictionary of 1869 says of that dark day: "Birds sang their evening songs, disappeared and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barn-yard, and candles were lighted in the houses. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."

¹⁶ Luke 21:28.

¹⁷ Mark 13:24-26.

The *Boston Gazette* of May 22, 1780, speaks of the dark day in the following terms: "It grew darker and darker until nearly one o'clock, when it became so dark that the inhabitants were obliged to quit their business, and they had to dine by the light of a candle."

The *Connecticut Journal* of May 25, 1780, said, "The greatest darkness was at least equal to what is commonly called candle-lighting in the evening." Herschel, the great astronomer, says, "The dark day in North America was one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest, but which philosophy is at a loss to explain."

The moon refused to shine. The text says, "The moon shall not give her light." This sign was accomplished the night following the dark day. In Stone's "History of Beverly" it is written, "The night succeeding that day [May 19, 1780] was of such pitchy darkness that in some instances horses could not be compelled to leave the stable when wanted for service." The moon had fullled the night previous, and it was not possible for an eclipse to occur at that time, yet the darkness was such that a white paper could not be seen when held within a few inches of the eye.

Mr. Tenney, of New Hampshire, is reported by the Historical Society as saying: "The darkness of the following evening

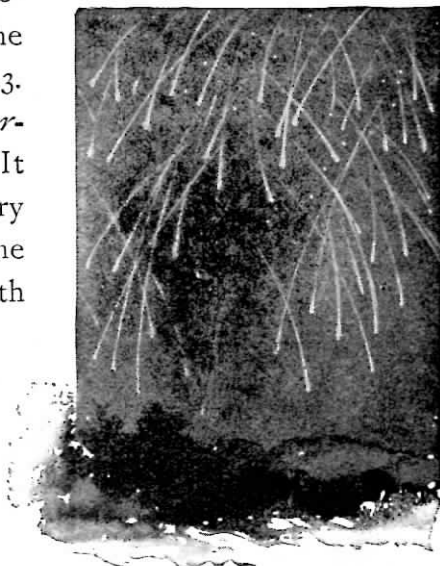


"Horses could not be compelled to leave the stable when wanted for service."

was probably as gross as has ever been observed since the Almighty first gave birth to light. I could not help conceiving at the time, that if every luminous body in the universe had been shrouded in impenetrable darkness, or struck out of existence, the darkness could not have been more complete." That night was by some called "the blackness of darkness." The full moon and all the stars of heaven could not light the first half of the night. After midnight the darkness began to pass away, and then the moon had the appearance of a great ball of blood.

The stars fell from heaven. The next thing foretold by the Saviour was the falling of the stars. This was fulfilled by millions of shooting stars or meteors falling to the ground in the early morning of Nov. 13, 1833. *The Christian Advocate and Journal* said of the falling stars: "It seemed as if the whole starry heavens had congregated at one point and were shooting forth with the velocity of lightning, and yet were not exhausted; thousands swiftly followed in the track of thousands, as if they were created for the occasion."

Frederick Douglass, the great orator of the colored race, describing the falling stars in his book, "My Bondage and Freedom," says: "The air seemed filled with bright descending



"The air seemed filled with bright descending messengers."

messengers from the sky. It was about daybreak when I saw this sublime scene. I was not without the suggestion at that moment, that it might be the harbinger of the coming of the Son of man; and in my then state of mind, I was prepared to hail Him as my friend and deliverer. I had read that the stars should fall from heaven, and they were now falling. I was suffering in my mind, and I was beginning to look away to heaven for the rest denied me on the earth."

Many thought the end of the world had come, and thousands prayed for mercy, because they believed that no other chance would be given them. Numerous writers give accounts of the falling of the stars, but none tell it better than He who said, "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."¹⁸ The very heavens seemed to be shaken at one point, and the meteors were thrown from the sky like green fruit from a tree when it is shaken by a mighty wind. The stars or meteors did not fall straight down to the ground, but were scattered in many directions, as snowflakes descending in a storm.

"The sea and the waves roaring." Following the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, other wonderful things were to appear on the earth, causing the hearts of men to fail them with fear. Mighty waves were to roll in from the sea in fulfilment of these words of our Saviour, "The sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."¹⁹ The great waves are supposed to be caused by earthquakes in the oceans.

Recently, in many parts of the world, the seacoasts have been overrun by tidal waves. A writer says he saw, on the

¹⁸ Rev. 6: 13.

¹⁹ Luke 21: 25, 26.

Pacific Coast of South America, the surface of the sea rise up like a mountain-side, and then rush upon the land. Vessels were carried ashore, and villages instantly submerged. At some points the waves ran more than sixty feet high. Six hundred lives were lost.

In the month of October, 1876, waves, caused by a cyclone, were carried over three islands near the mouth of the Ganges River, and two hundred and fifteen thousand people perished. In the spring of 1881 the island of Chios, or Scio, in



"The surface of the sea rise up like a mountain-side, and then rush upon the land. Vessels were carried ashore."

the Ægean Sea, was devastated by earthquakes. About four thousand of the inhabitants on that occasion perished. Ten to fifteen thousand were injured, and thirty thousand left homeless. During the summer of 1891 the floods along the Yellow River of China rendered four million people homeless.

In 1896 a tidal wave upon the coast of China destroyed four thousand people. An island of Japan was also buried under one of these ocean waves, and thirty thousand of the inhabitants were carried down to death. These are only a very few of the great multitude of disasters of this kind; and they are becoming more frequent as the years go by.

Stormy winds and cyclones are in evidence. The psalmist writes of "the stormy wind fulfilling His word."²⁰ Within the last twenty-five years cyclones and tornadoes have greatly multiplied upon the earth, but only a few out of the thousands of great storms can be cited. In the year 1874 a tornado passed



"The stormy wind fulfilling His word."

over Hongkong, China, destroying thirty thousand people and fifty million dollars' worth of property. In the summer of 1875, Indianola, Texas, was ruined by a cyclone, and one hundred and fifty persons were killed. Waterloo, South Carolina, was visited by a cyclone in the year 1879, which tore down one hundred houses and took the lives of fifteen of the inhabitants. During the month of June, 1882, a storm traveled across the state of Iowa, and swept away more than two mil-

lion dollars' worth of property, and also destroyed many people. In 1883, Racine, Wisconsin; Coventry, Montana; Valparaiso, Nebraska; White Pigeon, Michigan; Kansas City and St. Joseph, Missouri; Rochester, Minnesota, and many other points were struck by cyclones. By these disturbances, thousands of people

²⁰ Ps. 148:8.

were killed or badly wounded, and millions of dollars' worth of property was destroyed. A cyclone threw down acres of buildings in Louisville, Kentucky, March 27, 1890, at which time one hundred and fifty people died amid falling houses, and many more were badly injured. The same year a storm on the coast of Japan carried nine hundred fishing boats to sea, and every one of the occupants perished.

But the year 1896 brought greater destruction by storm than any previous season. The great tornado which visited St. Louis, Missouri, and vicinity, May 27, 1896, killed and injured nearly one thousand people. It cut right through the strongest stone buildings as though they were but straw in its path. No work of man can withstand the power of these winds. The hearts of the strongest men fail before them.

The condition of things in the kingdoms of the world show His coming to be near. The nations of the earth have arisen and run their course as foretold by the Word of God. The prophet Daniel was shown four kingdoms, which should rule the world successively from his day till the second coming of Jesus Christ. These were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome. Babylon, thousands of years ago, fulfilled every point in the prophecy which related to that kingdom. Medo-Persia had accomplished her work and passed away as a ruling power more than three hundred years before Jesus was born. Grecia, also, had fulfilled her part of the prophecy one hundred and sixty years before the Saviour was cradled in the manger at Bethlehem.

The kingdom of Rome was ruling the world when Jesus was born. It had dominion still when He ascended to heaven, and it was to continue a living power until He should come again,

Rome was, however, to be divided into ten parts, and is to comprise the great kingdoms of western Europe when Jesus comes. It was divided more than fifteen hundred years ago, and is now ruling, but in many parts. Western Europe is only a family of nations, with a number of kings governing one great country all at the same time. Daniel still calls it the "fourth kingdom," after it is divided. According to the prophecy, it is yet *Rome* in its character. This kingdom shall be strong as iron, says the prophet. "The kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it the strength of the iron."²¹ He says, "The kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken."²² It was to be broken up into a number of parts, but in every part there would be the strength of iron.

England, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, etc., are all parts of the fourth kingdom. This divided kingdom will continue in some sort until Christ comes to rule the territory which was under the dominion of Rome. These divisions are so nearly alike in character that the Lord still calls them the "fourth kingdom."

In speaking of their end, Daniel says, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it [the kingdom which God shall set up] shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."²³ The condition of these kingdoms shows that the second coming of Jesus Christ is but a little way off.

Another sign is the work of evil spirits in the last days. When Christ was telling His disciples of the signs which would show His coming near, He said, "There shall arise false Christs,

²¹ Dan. 2 : 41.

²² Verse 42.

²³ Verse 44.

and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." ²⁴

There has not been a time in the past when so many lying wonders have been performed as at the present. A little less than fifty years ago Spiritualism was first manifested in the Fox family, in Hydesville, near Rochester, New York. It was then called the "Rochester knockings." Since that time it has strengthened and spread to every nation of the world. Its wonders are seen in thousands of communities.

But what spirits are doing these wonders? The Bible answers: "They are the spirits of devils, working miracles." ²⁵ Where do they work miracles? and why? *Answer*—"Which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." ²⁶ Spiritualism is, therefore, the working of Satan. He works through evil spirits or fallen angels, for the purpose of deceiving the whole world. This he was to do in the last days, just before the coming of Christ. "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." ²⁷ Paul says the coming of Christ is to be "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." ²⁸

It is the chief object of these spirits to oppose the truth, and cause a falsehood to be believed. Whenever they speak they claim to be the spirits of the dead who have returned to the

²⁴ Matt. 24 : 24.

²⁵ Rev. 16 : 14.

²⁶ *Ib.*

²⁷ 1 Tim. 4 : 1.

²⁸ 2 Thess. 2 : 9, 10.

earth. They talk, rap, and write. They sometimes make themselves to be seen; they give presents and receive gifts. They use the same tone of voice, and assume the exact features, of persons who have long been dead. Even old familiar stories are told by them, to convince the living that their friends which have been buried are yet alive. They sometimes shake hands and visit with those who go to inquire of the spirits.

But the whole thing is a deception of Satan to confuse the minds of men, that they may not be ready to receive Christ at His coming. They who perform the miracles are not the spirits of the dead, because, as has been shown, "The dead know not anything."²⁹ The day in which a man dies, "his thoughts perish."³⁰ They are the same demoniac spirits which performed wonders in ancient times. They are such as talked with the wicked king Saul and claimed to be the prophet Samuel. They are of the class of spirits which deceived Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when Moses asked him to let Israel go. They are like the legion of spirits which drove the swine into the sea at Gadara, eighteen hundred years ago.³¹ These same unclean spirits oppose the truth with the lying wonders now, which were to be seen just before the time of Christ's coming.

Knowledge shall increase in the last days. As the prophet was looking into the future and beholding the busy scenes of the last days, some one said to him, "O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."³²

All things are getting ready for the end. Satan is working "with all power and signs and lying wonders" to darken the minds of men, while the Lord is increasing knowledge and

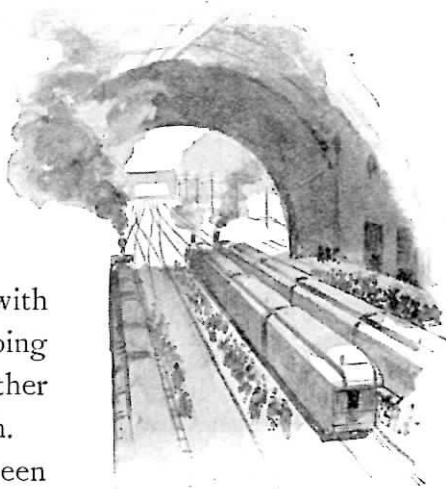
²⁹ Eccl. 9:5.

³⁰ Ps. 146:4.

³¹ See Mark 5:13.

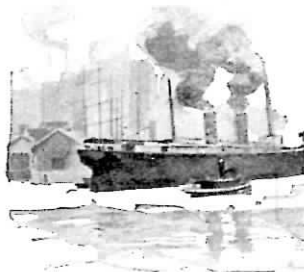
³² Dan. 12:4.

sending the light of truth to every people. Daniel was looking forward to the present time, when many are running to and fro, and knowledge is being increased. Traveling tends to an increase of knowledge. Through intercourse with the world we learn of what is going on in every part. Travelers gather up knowledge from all the earth.



"For then no fast trains were run by land."

But this could not have been done one hundred years ago as it is done now. For then no fast trains were run by land, nor did steamships travel the sea. Electric cars were not then rushing on the streets, nor bicycles speeding on the roads. Neither telegraphs nor telephones were in use. Typesetting was all done by fingers, and presses were run by hand; then printing was comparatively a slow business. Harvests were cut with a hand sickle, and grain pounded out with a flail. Spinning, knitting, weaving, and sewing were all done by hands and fingers. The work on the farm and in the shop was mostly performed in the same slow way.



"Nor did steamships travel the sea."

Nearly every minute from early morning till late in the night was required to do necessary work; therefore but little time was left for study. Money was scarce, and books were few and high in price. A newspaper was seldom seen. As

the mails were slow, and postage was charged up according to distance, very few letters were received. Under these circumstances it was difficult to gain knowledge.

But within a very few years a remarkable change has come over the world in these respects. Men and mails can now travel a thousand miles a day. The news which once required a year to cross over land and sea can now be sent by telegraph in a minute. The speeches of men can now be printed on a thousand presses, and read by the people of many countries, the very day upon which they are delivered.

Christ announced that when the signs in the sun, moon, and stars had been fulfilled, His coming would be near, even at the doors. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." ³³

When the trees bud and begin to put forth their leaves, and the grass springs up green from the ground, all know that summer will soon be present. So likewise may it be known that Christ's coming is near, even at the doors, when these signs are fulfilled. So near is the Saviour's coming, then, that some of that generation who saw the last one of these signs, the falling of the stars, will see the coming of the Lord. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." ³⁴

"Coming, coming, coming! *Who?*
Christ, the Lord of life and glory,
He who once for me and you
Died!—oh, depth of sin's sad story!

³³ Matt. 24: 32, 33.

³⁴ Verse 34.

Coming, not a helpless stranger,
Cradled in the friendless manger;
Coming, Lord of earth and heaven!
King! to whom all power is given;
Judge! at whose all-searching bar
All must stand, just what they are;
And the wicked tell with shame
Why they've cursed His holy name.

"Coming; coming, coming! *How?*
Clothed in strange, unearthly splendor,
Glory men ne'er dream of now,
Grandeur earth ne'er had attend her.
At His sight the heavens shall wither,
From His presence earth shall flee,
Islands move, and mountains thither
Seek the caverns of the sea.
Every eye shall then behold Him,
All the nations feel His ire;
While the brightness that enfolds Him,
Is to them consuming fire.
Thunders all the air shall thrill,
All the heavens with lightnings blaze,
And the universe stand still,
While through all its realms is heard
That profound, omnific word
Which to life the dead shall raise.

"Coming, coming, coming! *When?*
Ah! that question, solemn, thrilling!
For when He appeareth, then
All their earthly scenes fulfilling,
His sure word shall have an end.
And, behold, the day is near!
Signs in heaven and earth portend
That the Lord will soon appear.
Angry tones through wars proclaim it,
Scoffers by their scoffing name it,
And the mute and solemn sky
Has hung forth its prophecy.

Coming! while we wait and dally.
Coming! while we sleep in sin.
Swift as light o'er hill and valley,
That great day is coming in.
Sinner, rouse thee to thy fate.
Saint, be watchful at thy gate.
Saviour, make us meet t' appear
At Thy coming, now so near."

—*Criah Smith.*





PREPARATION FOR HIS COMING.

THE Saviour will not return to this earth without warning the world of His coming. Missionaries will be sent with the Gospel message to all people, that a chance may be given them to prepare for the judgment hour. In past ages the Lord has not failed to forewarn the people of any important event which was coming upon them. Therefore it was said, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."¹

Before the flood Noah was sent to warn the people of the destruction which was coming. The plagues did not fall upon Egypt until Moses and Aaron had made known unto them the judgments which were threatened. Jeremiah faithfully labored

¹ Amos 3:7.

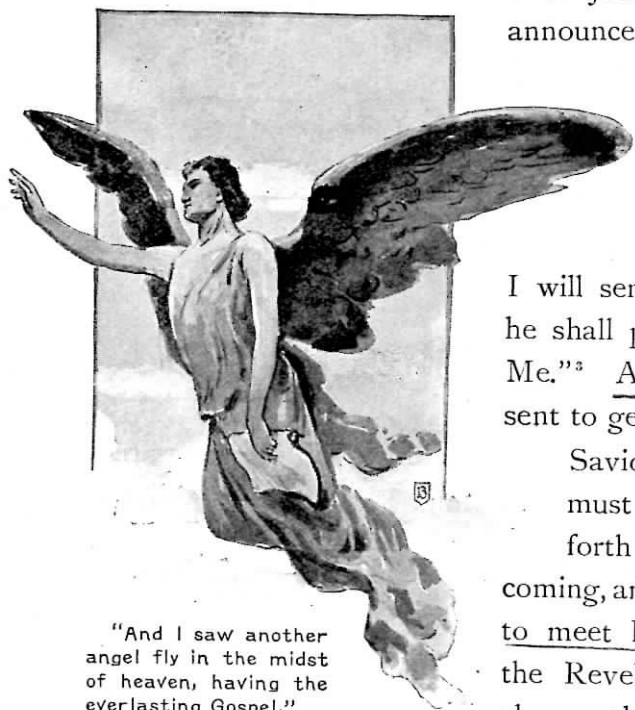
with Israel, and plead with them to turn away from their sins, before they were carried into Babylon. He also sent men with the same kind message to Edom and Moab, and to the kings of Ammon, of Tyre, and of Sidon.²

Jesus Christ was not made known to Israel as the Saviour until John the Baptist had first announced His coming and work.

The preaching of John, in preparing the way before the Lord, was foretold in these words: "Behold,

I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me."³ As John the Baptist was sent to get ready a people for the

Saviour's first coming, so must Gospel teachers go forth to proclaim His second coming, and thus prepare a people to meet Him. John, to whom the Revelation was given, was shown these messengers going forth with their work. To him



"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel."

they were revealed under the figure of an angel preaching the everlasting Gospel to every kindred. His words are: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying

² See Jer. 2:7.

³ Mal. 3:1.

with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."⁴

The hearts of Christians must be weaned from the world and from every idol before they can long for the Saviour's return. All sin must be forsaken by them. In writing of the work to be done for those who will be waiting to meet Jesus, the prophet says, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand."⁵ The worldly-mindedness and the corrupt practises of the unconverted blind their minds and make it impossible for them to understand. Solomon says, "Wickedness overthroweth the sinner."⁶ "They would none of My counsel; they despised all My reproof. Therefore shall they eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."⁷

The condition of both classes is thus stated: "Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee."⁸ At Christ's coming the wicked will be found filled with darkness; but the righteous will be seen dwelling in the light which the everlasting Gospel will cause to shine upon their way. The lamps of the waiting ones will be trimmed and burning. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching."⁹

⁴ Rev. 14: 6, 7.

⁵ Dan. 12: 10.

⁶ Prov. 13: 6.

⁷ Chapter I: 30, 31.

⁸ Isa. 60: 2.

⁹ Luke 12: 35-37.

In the above scripture is a beautiful lesson drawn from the ancient custom of weddings. The bridegroom prepared wedding garments for all the guests who were expected at the marriage supper. No garments were allowed to be worn except those which the bridegroom had made especially for the occasion.

The wedding usually took place in the night. The bridegroom went



"Every guest was required to have a lamp trimmed and burning brightly when the bridegroom arrived."

to the home of the bride to receive her, and then returned to the place where the guests were in waiting. Every guest was required to have a lamp trimmed and burning brightly when the bridegroom arrived. The wedding garments were all to be neatly fitted on every person in the company. All were to be wide-awake, and in the

best possible condition to make everything agreeable. During these waiting moments the return of the bridegroom was the chief subject of thought and conversation.

In the same manner as these garments were all ready and waiting for the bridegroom to return with his bride, so must Christ's people be ready and waiting for Him to return. As

those who were called to that supper were refused a place at the table unless they had on the wedding garments; so none will be received when Jesus comes except those who wear the wedding garment of righteousness, which He has prepared for His waiting guests. The good works of God's people, apart from Jesus Christ, will not be sufficient to save them. Not one will be able to stand in that day save those who are clothed with the garment of salvation, woven in the loom of heaven, by Jesus Christ.

"Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."¹⁰ As the refiner sits before the heated furnace to watch the silver as it is melted and the worthless dross removed, so will Christ lead His people, if need be, through the furnace of affliction, that they may be purified from every stain of sin. Or, as the fuller, by heating, washing, and ironing, prepares the finest cloth for the market, so will Christ bring His people through the trials of the last days, and perfect them for heaven. They will then be presented to Him "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."¹¹ Every sin will have been confessed, and every evil will have been put away by those who are ready and waiting for the coming of the Lord. In describing them, John says, "In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God."¹² And of them the Lord declares, "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."¹³

Closely following the above announcement, John says, "And

¹⁰ Mal. 3 : 2, 3.

¹¹ Eph. 5 : 27.

¹² Rev. 14 : 5.

¹³ Verse 12.

I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle."¹⁴ It is therefore evident that when Jesus comes upon the white cloud He will find a people ready to meet Him. It is also further evident that this same people will be found in faith, keeping all the commandments of God.

A further view of the waiting church of Christ is given in the following language: "The dragon was wroth with the woman [the church of Christ], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."¹⁵ The word "remnant" means the last part of a thing or people. Another has written of them in these words: "The remnant of Israël shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth."¹⁶ Their faithfulness in keeping the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, arouses the wrath of the dragon, and brings upon them a storm of persecution. Satan does not object to a people keeping *some* of God's commandments, provided they will transgress others; but he declares war upon that church which will keep *all* the commandments.

There is in the land a Christian people who endeavor to obey every one of the ten commandments, through faith in Jesus Christ. This includes the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. They do not believe that the first day of the week, or Sunday, is the Lord's Sabbath, therefore they do not observe it as a sacred day. Because of their faith and practise in this matter, many of them have

¹⁴ Rev. 14: 14.¹⁵ Chap. 12: 17.¹⁶ Zeph. 3: 13.

been sent to prison, and others have been committed to the chain-gang, classing them with the worst of criminals. The first arrest and imprisonment of any of these people was in Arkansas, in 1885. Since that time Tennessee, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, and other states have joined in the persecution. Counting from the beginning of this persecution in 1885, up to September, 1896, there have been about one hundred forty cases of imprisonment of Christian Sabbath-keepers, those who kept the same day that Jesus kept. During this period the time spent in confinement by these persons aggregated seventeen hundred thirty-eight days. Eight hundred ten of these days were served in the chain-gang in Tennessee.

It was admitted on all sides that those who were arrested were excellent citizens, with the exception that they worked on Sunday. Still those who inform against them often do Sunday work themselves. Numerous other people in the same neighborhood do various things in violation of the Sunday laws, yet they are not molested. As a rule, none but those who keep the Sabbath according to the Bible commandment are fined and imprisoned because of Sunday labor; that is only the pretext. They go very quietly about their business on Sundays, so as not to disturb the peace of any who desire to keep the day. But their persecutors, ignorant of what they are doing, have determined to make war upon them, and therefore spy around to discover them at work, and then send officers to have them arrested.

Notwithstanding the trials through which they pass, their courage is good. They hope for deliverance soon; and they expect the conflict to continue until Jesus comes. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."¹⁷

¹⁷ 2 Tim. 3: 12.

The Lord encourages His people in this conflict, saying to them, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."¹⁸

The time of the revealing of His glory is near. The apostle speaks of a time when the people of God should awake out of sleep. "For now," says he, "is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."¹⁹ The time in which we are now living is of the most intense moment. Soon it will be too late to put away sin. There will be no repentance after Jesus comes. As the Saviour closes His priestly work in heaven, it will be said: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."²⁰

¹⁸ 1 Peter 4: 12, 13.

¹⁹ Rom. 13: 11, 12.

²⁰ Rev. 22: 11, 12.





VICTORY OVER DEATH.

WHEN everything has been made ready for His coming, "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."¹

The voice of Jesus will awake His sleeping children, for His words are spirit and life. They may have slumbered long, yet the Son of God can bring them to life again. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."² The risen saints will be changed to immortality by the same voice that raises the dead, and "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."³

When Jesus comes again, all the holy angels will be with Him.⁴ "And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect."⁵ At all

¹ 1 Thess. 4: 16.

² Isa. 26: 19.

³ 1 Thess. 4: 17.

⁴ Matt. 25: 31.

⁵ Chapter 24: 31.

graves where the saints come forth will angels be ready to receive and gather them to meet the Lord in the cloud of glory. Two classes of saints will meet the Lord in that day. One class will be those who now sleep in Jesus, and who will then be raised



"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust."

from the dead. Another class will be the righteous who will be alive at His coming, and who will then be changed to immortality. In speaking of this, the apostle says, "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."⁶ He then shows that the saints receive immortality, or undying natures, in the very moment when they are changed: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal

must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."⁷

The righteous will come forth to life, free from pain; an

⁶ 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52.

⁷ Verses 53, 54.

open grave will be before their eyes, and angels will be by their side. Then they will understand that death is forever past, and with joy will they sing: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"⁸ Neither the grave nor death can ever hold them more. It will be victory, final and complete, over every foe. What joy will fill the hearts of the redeemed when they realize that Jesus has come! They will know that He is the source of their gladness, and with immortal tongues they can sing: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."⁹ The Gospel prophet foresaw the glad rising again of the righteous dead: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."¹⁰

The day of His coming will be a day of transcending brightness. There will be the glory of millions of angels, the glory of Jesus, and the brightness of the Father's glory, manifested at Christ's coming. "He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels."¹¹ This glory will be as a flaming fire to the wicked, and will destroy them from off the earth. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."¹²

Because of the revelation of that glory the ungodly will call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them, that they may be hidden from its power. Amazed and terrified at what they behold, they will seek to hide themselves in dens and among

⁸ 1 Cor. 15:55.

⁹ Verse 57.

¹⁰ Isa. 26:19.

¹¹ Luke 9:26.

¹² 2 Thess. 1:7, 8.

the rocks.¹³ But neither dens nor mountains can shelter them from that glory, which will be brighter than many noonday suns. In despair, they will cry out, "The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"¹⁴ That glory will reach every hiding-place, and slay the wicked who may be living to behold the coming of Christ.

But that glory will be a joy to the righteous. "He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day."¹⁵ "I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."¹⁶ The saints themselves will be glorified and shine as the light. And they will be able to stand and rejoice in that day. "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty."¹⁷ "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."¹⁸ "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."¹⁹

Not a child of God will be forgotten. As the dead are buried out of sight, the question is often asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?"²⁰ Can those who molder to dust in the grave ever come forth to live again? Will the lips closed by death answer when Jesus calls? Hear the patriarch's reply: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee."²¹ The righteous are waiting God's appointed time till all things are ready. In this life the Christian longs to meet his Saviour, but the Saviour also desires to meet the Christian at the resurrection of the just. Jesus knows where every one is resting; and at the set time He will call them forth to immortality. "Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands."²² He desires to see His people in the

¹³ Rev. 6: 15, 16.¹⁴ Verse 17.¹⁵ 2 Thess. 1: 10.¹⁶ Ps. 17: 15.¹⁷ Isa. 33: 17.¹⁸ Matt. 5: 8.¹⁹ 1 Cor. 13: 12.²⁰ Job 14: 14.²¹ Verses 14, 15.²² Verse 15.

enjoyment of the life and home which await them. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."²³ "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory."²⁴

The redeemed will then be perfect. Neither death nor pain can ever touch them again. Every form will be complete. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."²⁵ In describing that state, the Saviour says, "They are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."²⁶

The curse of sin has marred man's beauty, and dwarfed and deformed his body until his features are uncomely. Sorrow or disease or old age leave their marks upon all faces. But "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth."²⁷ No trace of sorrow will be left. Every organ will be perfect. No dimness can becloud any eye. All ears shall be made to hear, and tongues enabled to talk. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."²⁸ Then songs of praises will be sung by mouths that have been dumb in this life. Ears shall then delight in music which never heard the sound of a note here. Crippled ones, who have never had the use of their limbs in this world, will then be active and free, as the hart upon the mountains. Eyes that have never yet looked upon the beauties of the heavens and the earth will then behold the fulness of God's glory in all His works. So complete will be

²³ Isa. 53: 11.

²⁴ John 17: 24.

²⁵ Phil. 3: 21.

²⁶ Luke 20: 36.

²⁷ Isa. 25: 8.

²⁸ Chapter 35: 5, 6.

the glory of that redemption that Jesus says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."²⁹

Some have thought that God can not raise those to life again who have returned to dust. But the prophet in vision beheld the raising of the dead. He says: "And the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above." "And the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet." And the Lord speaks further through His prophet, "Ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves."³⁰ The question will be settled when the graves open, and God's people come forth into life equal unto the angels.

THE SECOND RESURRECTION.

In the Revelation John was shown that the righteous "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Of the wicked, which are called "the rest of the dead," he writes, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."³¹ Their resurrection, therefore, does not take place till the thousand years are past. Concerning the righteous he says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."³² The second death here presented is the death which the wicked will die after they are raised from the dead. This can not take place till the thousand years are finished. It will be considered in the next chapter.

²⁹ Matt. 13:43.

³⁰ Eze. 37:7, 8, 10, 13.

³¹ Rev. 20:4, 5.

³² Verse 6.

Scripture evidence has been given in past chapters that the earth will at last be given to the redeemed, but the curse of sin must first be removed. Satan and wickedness have defiled this world, and it must be purified from its corruption before the saints of God possess it. The judgment of the wicked dead will take place after Jesus comes and raises His people to life. And God's people must have a place of abode in the time of this judgment. The prophecy says that judgment is to be "given to the saints of the Most High."³³ In the book of Revelation John says, "I saw thrones, and they [the saints] sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them."³⁴ It is during the time of this judgment that they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

Jesus told His disciples that He would ascend to heaven to prepare a place for His people, and He added, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."³⁵ It is to this place, which Christ prepares while He is in heaven, that the saints will be taken when they are raised from the dead. There, in the "Father's house," Jesus will receive them unto Himself. In this world they have had sorrows and trials sore, but they will receive a glorious reward in the place that Christ has gone to make ready.

After entering the cloud of glory, they will ascend with Jesus and the angels to the city of God. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."³⁶ God's people will then know what it means to appear in

³³ Dan. 7 : 22.³⁴ Rev. 20 : 4.³⁵ John 14 : 3.³⁶ Isa. 26 : 1, 2.

glory with their Saviour. The great desire of Christ, as told by the apostle, is to "present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."³⁷ John, in vision, heard the songs of joy which they will sing after reaching heaven. "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God."³⁸

They will speak of the judgments that have just been visited upon the wicked and persecuting nations of the earth, and then shout, "Alleluia," again. The angels and elders around the throne will then unite with them in worship and praise to God. Afterward a voice from the throne will say, "Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great."³⁹

And in response to this, the seer of Patmos says, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."⁴⁰ The song which will be sung when Jesus gathers His people to heaven will tell of a reward so glorious that pen can not describe it. And those who are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb shall then "hunger no more, neither thirst any more; . . . for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."⁴¹

³⁷ Jude 24.

³⁸ Rev. 19 : 1.

³⁹ Verse 5.

⁴⁰ Verse 6.

⁴¹ Chapter 7 : 16, 17.



THE SAINTS INHERIT THE EARTH.

THOUGH the saints ascend to heaven when Jesus comes, yet at the appointed time they will return to the earth. It has ever been the purpose of God to give the earth to His people. "He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited."¹ "The earth hath He given to the children of men."² "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."³ "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."⁴

It is well understood by those who believe the Bible that the curse of sin has filled the earth with sorrow and desolation. But Christ, through redemption, will remove the curse and restore the earth. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."⁵ The psalmist says: "In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and

¹ Isa. 45: 18.

² Ps. 115: 16.

³ Matt. 5: 5.

⁴ Num. 14: 21.

⁵ Matt. 18: 11.

from the river unto the ends of the earth."⁶ The earth has been filled with sorrow and crying, and the inspired psalmist utters this petition: "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory."⁷

In the beginning the earth was made to be an abode for man; and man was then created and placed in possession of his home. But in the early history of the race they so corrupted the world that it was deluged by a flood of waters, which destroyed the wicked out of it. After the flood, the earth was given to Noah, a man of righteousness. When sinners again arose and corrupted the earth, the Lord called a righteous man from among his kindred, and gave the world by promise to him and to his seed. The name Abraham was given to the man thus called. The meaning of this name is "the father of a multitude," or "the father of nations."

The promise made to Abraham was in these words: "And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession."⁸ The Lord repeated the substance of this promise to Abraham a number of times. He also gave the same to Isaac and to Jacob, and included in the promises all the heirs of faith. He confirmed it all unto Abraham by an oath, saying, "By Myself have I sworn . . . that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."⁹

⁶Ps. 72:7, 8.

⁷Verse 19.

⁸Gen. 17:7, 8.

⁹Chapter 22:16-18.

Paul says that to Abraham was made "the promise, that he should be the heir of the world."¹⁰ The martyr Stephen, in his speech before the Jewish council, showed that neither Abraham nor his seed had received the promised inheritance: "He [the Lord] gave him none inheritance in it [the land which was promised], no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him."¹¹ When Stephen delivered this discourse, he was on trial before the council of the Jews for his faith in Christ. Before that body of men he declared the truthfulness of Christianity, basing his conclusions upon the promises which God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He showed, by arguments which they could not deny, that the promises made to their fathers must all be fulfilled through Christ. He proved that their title to an inheritance must be received in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had denied and crucified. He was summing up these Bible truths in such a convincing manner that they became enraged and stoned him to death in order to stop his testimony.

As these promises to the patriarchs had not been fulfilled at the time Stephen gave this testimony, and have not been fulfilled since that time, it remains for them to be fulfilled to the people of God in the future. Therefore it is written, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."¹² In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we read of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Barak, Samson, Jephthæ, Samuel, David, of the prophets, of holy women, and many others, that none of them had

¹⁰ Rom. 4:13.¹¹ Acts 7:5.¹² Gal. 3:26, 29.

received the fulfilment of the promises when that epistle was written. Even to Enoch, who ascended to heaven without dying, the promises had not been fulfilled. Nothing short of an everlasting inheritance in the earth made new can accomplish this promise. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, together with all the redeemed, will then receive their share in the reward.

It has been shown that the saints will ascend to heaven and remain there a thousand years. Evidence has also been given that the wicked dead will be resurrected at the end of the thousand years. During the time between the resurrection of these two classes, the wicked are to be judged. Of the righteous it is said: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."¹³ They take part in the examination of the judgment books relating to the cases of the wicked. But the lost will remain silent in death during that time. "But the rest of the dead [the ungodly] lived not again until the thousand years were finished."¹⁴

While the saints are in heaven, and the wicked lie in their graves, Satan will have no one to deceive. But the resurrection which will take place when the thousand years are finished, will fill the world with sinners. The company which shall come up then will be composed of all those who died in sin. What an unholy throng that will be! Satan can then begin his work again; therefore it is said: "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations [the resurrected wicked] which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the

¹³ Rev. 20: 4.

¹⁴ Verse 5.

sea." The Saviour, with His people and the holy city, will have descended from heaven when Satan gathers the ungodly host together. "And they [the wicked] went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."¹⁵

The fire which shall descend will utterly consume the wicked, and they shall be seen no more forever. As declared by our Lord, "They that have done evil" shall come forth "unto the resurrection of damnation."¹⁶ Of their reward it is written, "And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."¹⁷ "And they shall be as though they had not been."¹⁸ "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." "He passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found."¹⁹

Both Satan and sinners will be destroyed. "Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."²⁰ As wickedness, both root and branch, is to be destroyed, Satan himself must be included in the destruction, because he is the root of all sin. We read in the book of Hebrews that the Saviour took upon Himself man's infirmities and died in them, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."²¹

¹⁵ Rev. 20:7-9.

¹⁶ John 5:29.

¹⁷ James 1:15.

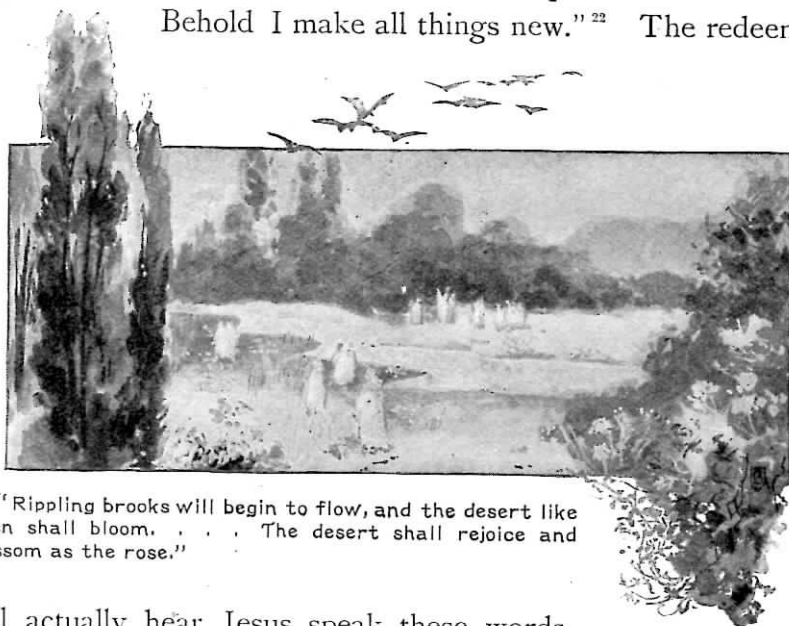
¹⁸ Obadiah 16.

¹⁹ Ps. 37:10, 20, 36.

²⁰ Mal. 4:1.

²¹ Chapter 2:14.

When sin and sinners are gone, to appear no more forever, there will be nothing left to oppose the kingdom of Christ. His mission is to redeem His people, remove the curse, renew the earth, and give it into the hands of those who will use it in harmony with God's original purpose. The apostle John, in vision, saw Christ make the world new. He heard the words spoken when "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new."²² The redeemed



"Rippling brooks will begin to flow, and the desert like Eden shall bloom. . . . The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

will actually hear Jesus speak these words. They will also behold the mighty working of His power in restoring the earth from the curse of sin.

They will look out over the desolate world as Jesus says, "Behold," and just then will arise to view in every place, things more beautiful than were seen by Adam before he transgressed. Beautiful trees will appear, and fruitful vines spring up, while rippling brooks will begin to flow, and the desert like Eden shall

²² Rev. 21:5.

bloom. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon."²³

The Power which made the earth in the beginning can make it even more beautiful than at the first. There will be nothing left to remind us of the curse. Desert lands will be made fruitful. Rough places will become smooth. The air will be pleasant. Every song shall be full of melody, and all hearts glad with praise. There shall be no cry of oppression nor torturing pain. "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders."²⁴ "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified."²⁵ "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."²⁶ Christ's kingdom is to be located in this earth where Adam was given dominion. The earth, where man has been in conflict with Satan, is where he will enjoy the victory through Christ. "And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him." "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever."²⁷

The gentle nature which the animals possessed before sin entered the world will be enjoyed by those which shall be created

²³ Isa. 35 : 1, 2.

²⁴ Chapter 60 : 18.

²⁵ Verse 21.

²⁶ Dan. 7 : 27.

²⁷ Verses 14, 18.

for the new earth. The condition is stated thus by the prophet: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."²⁸

Before man was cast out of Eden he was commanded to dress and keep the garden;²⁹ and when his redemption is complete, and the earth renewed, he will be given a pleasant occupation. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."³⁰

In the present life people build houses, and soon they die and leave them, or the home is sold, and another inhabits it. Perchance the fire consumes it, and the labor of years is destroyed in an hour. A short life of pain and disappointment carries man down to a cold, damp grave; and his children after him live and die in like manner. But in the glorious new earth there will be no grief. Then "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick."³¹ There, old age will not dim the eye, nor lessen the strength of men. No blight, no rust, nor decay will be found in that land.

O, who will go to that home of the blest,
Where time never dims a mansion of rest;
Where years and cycles shall burnish the gold,
As age after age their beauties unfold?

²⁸ Isa. 11: 6, 7.

²⁹ See Gen. 2: 15.

³¹ Chapter 33: 24.

³⁰ Isa. 65: 21, 22.



THE CITY OF GOLD.

CONNECTED with the kingdom of Christ is a royal city that excels by far anything which the eyes of man have ever beheld. Every organized government has a capital, where its officers meet to transact business for the country. Such a place is called the seat of government. So also a real city of surpassing grandeur belongs to the kingdom of Christ, and within it is the throne of His power.

The name, Jerusalem, was given to the chief city of Israel, where the throne of David was located. But the great city which contains the throne of Christ, is called "New Jerusalem," "Holy Jerusalem,"¹ "Heavenly Jerusalem,"² "City of God,"³ "City of the Great King."⁴ Other titles are also given to it.

The city must now be where Christ is. Paul speaks of the Jerusalem which is above⁵ to distinguish it from the Jerusalem which is on the earth. It is found where the angels reside, and in the place where God sits as Judge. "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly

¹ Rev. 21:2, 10.

² Heb. 12:22.

³ Ps. 87:3.

⁴ Ps. 48:2.

⁵ Gal. 4:26.

Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all."⁶ It was of the heavenly Jerusalem that Christ was speaking just before His crucifixion, when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you."⁷ The city is therefore builded in the place where Jesus has gone.

It will descend from heaven to the earth. When the earth shall be made new, and the kingdom of Christ located under the whole heaven, the New Jerusalem will also be within its borders. Therefore of his vision the apostle writes: "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."⁸ The thousand years of judgment were just closing as he saw the city descend, complete in every part, and shining with a splendor which made the angel anxious to have the apostle behold its glory. "And he [the angel] carried me [John] away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."⁹ John not only saw it descend from heaven, but he beheld the city upon the earth. "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."¹⁰ The nations here mentioned are those saved by the blood of Christ out of every kindred, tongue, and people—those who will live in and belong to that kingdom.

The apostle carefully noted the measure of the wonderful city as the angel passed around its walls with a measuring rule. "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the

⁶ Heb. 12: 22, 23.

⁷ John 14: 2.

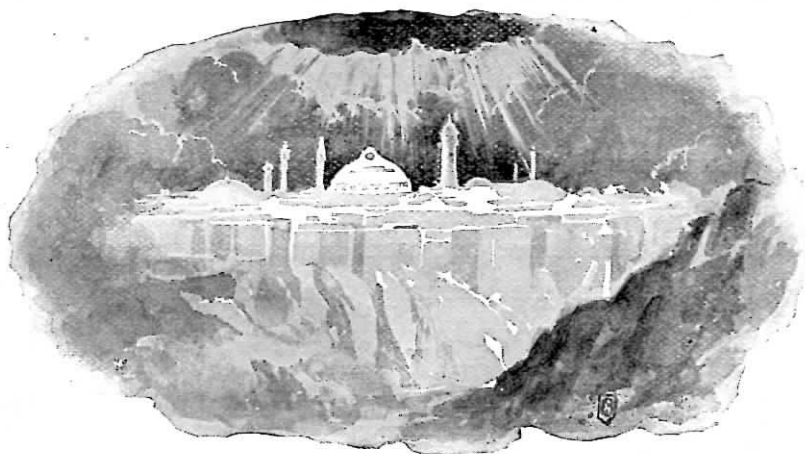
⁸ Rev. 21: 2.

⁹ Verses 10, 11.

¹⁰ Verse 24.

city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."¹¹

According to the ancient manner of measuring walled cities, the circumference, the distance around it, was measured. The whole distance around the New Jerusalem is twelve thousand



"And shining with a splendor which made the angel anxious to have the apostle behold its glory,"

furlongs. There are eight furlongs in one mile, and in twelve thousand furlongs there would be fifteen hundred miles. As four sides of the city make fifteen hundred miles, so must one side be equal to one-fourth of fifteen hundred, or three hundred and seventy-five miles. It therefore contains one hundred and forty thousand six hundred and twenty-five square miles, or ninety millions of acres. This is a larger area than the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois combined. It is about as large as three

¹¹ Rev. 21: 15, 16.

states like New York. It is greater in extent than the countries of England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and Switzerland put together. How small are the cities of the world compared to the heavenly Jerusalem!

The city is square, and has four sides of equal length, so that its buildings and streets are all arranged in perfect order and harmony. As Jesus was telling His disciples what He would do for them after ascending to heaven, He said, "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you."¹² Many are the mansions in God's universe; and our Lord has promised to prepare places for His people. David sings of the palaces and "towers" in "the city of the great King."¹³

The Lord's people have generally been poor in this world, and many of them have not owned even a cheap home. But could they look into the heavenly Jerusalem, and behold what is waiting for them, they would see buildings richer than any king can make; for it is said, "The city was pure gold."¹⁴ The heirs of the kingdom can well afford to wait for such a reward.

The city of gold is perfect in beauty, and complete in every arrangement. Nothing cheap or unfinished will be there. Beneath its walls are foundations made of twelve varieties of most precious stones. These stones, like lamps, shed forth beams of light, and shine with all the colors of the rainbow. In the twelve foundations are engraven the names of the twelve apostles. Upon the foundation is a wall of jasper stone, clear as crystal. Opening through the walls are twelve large gates of pearl, and upon the gates are written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

John, in describing the greatness and glory of the place, says

¹² John 14:2.

¹³ Ps. 48:2, 3, 12.

¹⁴ Rev. 21:18.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."²³ The sun and the moon will not cease to shine, for in that day it is said, "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold."²⁴ But in the city the glory of God will shine with a power above the noonday sun. "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."²⁵

God and Christ are light, and their glory, which fills the city, reaches far beyond its gates, that the nations of them which are saved may walk in its light. Of this glory David wrote: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."²⁶

THE PARADISE OF GOD.

When the gates of Paradise were closed against Adam and Eve, angels took charge of their home, and it was finally transplanted to heaven. Thus, when Paul was in vision, "caught up to the third heaven," he could say he was "caught up into Paradise,"²⁷ because Paradise was then in heaven. The tree of life is in Paradise; so the promise is, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."²⁸ As already noticed, the tree of life is in

²³ Rev. 21:23.²⁵ Chapter 60:19.²⁷ 2 Cor. 12:2, 4.²⁴ Isa. 30:26.²⁶ Ps. 48:1, 2.²⁸ Rev. 2:7.

the midst of the New Jerusalem. "On either side of the river, was there the tree of life."²⁹

Here will Adam find again his Eden home. Through all time, since the fall, Jesus has preserved its beauty untouched by sin. Not a leaf will be faded, nor one flower missing. The vines of Paradise will show the same freshness, and their bloom fill the air with fragrance, as before the fall. The very plants and shrubs in which Adam and Eve delighted will be there. The trees, which in creation the Lord made to grow from the ground, will yield their fruit as they did before Adam sinned.

But there will be this difference—the place will be greatly enlarged, that the redeemed may have room to dwell. "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other [that is, the people born and saved since Adam was driven from Eden], shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait [small] for me; give place to me that I may dwell."³⁰ Again, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes."³¹

Man lost Paradise because of his transgression. His sins caused the Lord to shut the gate against him. He must now show himself willing to obey God's commandments, before he can be admitted back to Eden, and have a right to eat of life's tree. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."³² "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."³³

Those of all ages and people who have been obedient to God will be given the freedom of the city of gold, and a right

²⁹ Rev. 22:2.

³⁰ Isa. 49:20.

³¹ Chapter 54:2.

³² Rev. 22:14.

³³ Isa. 26:2.

to the tree of life. Many who will enter the gates of pearl were the poor and unnoticed of earth. In humility they defended the truth, while the wicked persecuted them for it. To them the cause of Christ was dearer than life. Some, like Moses, have refused kingdoms; but now their inheritance excels all earthly treasures.

The New Jerusalem was known to Abraham, "for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."³⁴ The Lord gave the patriarch knowledge of the splendor that shines in the city of God, and told him of the joys in the land beyond the grave. These things were valued by him more than home and friends. He therefore left his native land, and became a pilgrim and a stranger, that he might receive a better inheritance, "for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."³⁵

The heirs of promise have not been satisfied with the earth cursed with sin, nor with the cities which wicked men have built. "They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city."³⁶ The wisdom of their choice honors God, and He delights in what they have chosen. "For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people."³⁷

Those millions of acres, covered with empty mansions of gold, are now viewed by the angels as an evidence of God's love for man. The rich buildings are finished and waiting for the sleeping saints to arise. In a lonely hut lives a faithful Christian; he is poor in this world, but his name is written in heaven, and his title is clear to a home of gold. In yonder prison lies

³⁴ Heb. 11: 10.³⁵ Verse 14.³⁶ Verse 16.³⁷ Isa. 65: 18, 19.

a man condemned for keeping the commandments of God, but in the royal city a palace awaits him. He may be classed with wicked men here, but he will be made equal to the angels there.

In heaven the question may be asked, Is the Creator willing to own His children in the earth? But the city of gold prepared for their reception answers, "God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city." He is not ashamed to own before the angels the sinner who repents. "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."³⁸

Its beauty will exceed man's fondest hope. "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him."³⁹ But it is only a little while now till the saints of God shall see the city of gold. They soon shall see "the King in His beauty," and behold the Jerusalem above. There, upon broad avenues, three hundred seventy-five miles in length, and all of burnished gold, they shall meet to sing of their deliverance. From a broad river, pure and sparkling, they shall drink of the water of life. Along the banks of the crystal stream they will pluck and eat the fruit from life's tree. Beneath the far-reaching branches of that tree, they will meet with Jesus and contemplate His love. With eyes made strong by the glory of God, they will be able to see the perfection of beauty contained in all nature.

Their troubles will be ended, sorrows all gone, and disappointments shall come no more. No aching heads, no broken hearts, nor disappointed hopes for that land. The fresh-opened graves,

³⁸ Luke 15 : 10.

³⁹ Isa. 64 : 4.

to receive the form of a beloved one, shall not be there. The funeral procession will not be seen, for "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." The controversy will then be ended, the curse will be removed, the earth renewed, the kingdom established, the victory given to all who believe, and the universe made clean. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." ⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Rev. 5: 13.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES



A sixteen-page illustrated weekly religious journal for old and young, treating all lines of Bible truth, especially the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, showing from week to week how the events of the past and present are a fulfillment of these wonderful books. Where are we in this world's history? is a question troubling the greatest minds of the day, and one that is worthy of most serious thought and reflection. The prayerful study of God's Word reveals wonderful truths in regard to this question. As a leader in such study and a faithful expounder of the Word of God, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has no equal. It is a thoroughly live and up-to-date journal, having the following important departments:—

General Articles, containing articles on many Bible subjects by leading writers. **Editorial**, containing practical talks on practical themes by experienced editors. **Question Corner**, in which are answered by the editors, various Bible questions of general interest, from inquirers. **The Outlook** shows how the events of the day are fulfilling important lines of prophecy. **The Home**, in which appear good stories, hints on health, and items on science and other points. **Missions**, their work, condition, and needs both at home and abroad are brought to view from week to week. **International S. S. Lessons** with helpful notes. **News and Notes** sums up in concise form the world's daily happenings. Sample copy free.

Single copy, one year (52 numbers)..... \$1 00
To foreign countries in Postal Union \$1 50 (6s.)

Address, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Oakland, Cal.

AMERICAN SENTINEL

A sixteen-page weekly, published in the interests of religious liberty,—Christian and constitutional. In the application of principles, non-sectarian and non-partisan. The only journal in the United States wholly devoted to the Christian and American principle of complete separation of church and state. Price, \$1.00 per year.

Address AMERICAN SENTINEL, 39 Bond Street, New York City.

OUR LITTLE FRIEND

What to provide for the active minds of the younger members of the family, is an ever-present question. Do you wish to give the children something of worth? Do you want them to cultivate a taste for that which will be of benefit in after life? Then give them OUR LITTLE FRIEND. It contains not a line of trashy or sensational reading, but is filled with practical, moral lessons and interesting things of nature. A special feature is the department of the Sabbath school lessons, where are found two sets of lessons arranged in simple style, adapted to the young.

EIGHT PAGES WEEKLY, ILLUSTRATED

Single copy, per year..... 50 cents
Five to nine copies to one address, each..... 45 “
Ten or more copies to one address, each..... 40 “

Address OUR LITTLE FRIEND, Oakland, Cal.

YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR

A twenty-four-page, illustrated, weekly magazine for youth and children, devoted to moral and mental culture, and especially designed as a companion for Bible study.

Single copy, per year..... \$1 00
Ten or more copies to one address, per year..... 65

Address YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR, Battle Creek, Mich.

THE GOSPEL IN CREATION

The title of this book gives an excellent idea of its contents. It is easy to overlook the fact that Moses wrote the Gospel as truly in Genesis as did Paul to the Romans; and this leads us to forget that the power employed in creation and the power pledged for our redemption are one and the same. Hence many spiritual blessings of great value are made of none effect.

The author of this work,—Dr. E. J. Waggoner, of London,—has placed the Bible record of the works of creation and redemption side by side, thus enabling the reader to attain and preserve a clear knowledge of the subject treated. A study of this book will lead to a recognition of the Gospel in every work of God,—in the grass beneath our feet, and the sun that rules our day. These truths are presented in a beautiful and thoughtful manner, and invite the closest attention. It contains 169 pages, is illustrated, and bound in wine-colored cloth, at 40c., and in boards with cloth back, at 25c.

PROPHETIC LIGHTS

This is a treatise on the leading prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, showing the exact fulfillment of the predictions therein made concerning Egypt, Tyre, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, as well as those pointing to the second coming of Christ.

It is interesting to read of the fulfillment of that portion of the Sacred Word relating to empires now in ruins, but when such fulfillments form a part of a chain of prophecy reaching to the second coming of our Lord, the importance of their study can not be over estimated. The deep and careful study the author has given the subject is apparent on every page. The book contains nearly 200 large pages, is illustrated, and well bound and printed. Cloth, with gilt edges, \$1.00; paper covers, 50c.

SABBATH READINGS

Four volumes of choice selections from prose and poetry suitable for the Sabbath. They contain 1551 pages of the most carefully selected stories for every member of the family circle. These selections are short but entertaining and instructive, and will be found very appropriate for class, birthday, or holiday gifts. They are strongly and neatly bound in cloth, in various attractive colors. Per set, \$1.60; per volume, each complete in itself, 40c.

STORY OF PITCAIRN ISLAND

By Rosalind Amelia Young, a Native Daughter

Pitcairn Island, one of the volcanic gems of the Pacific, has been heard of wherever the English language has been spoken. The story of the working out of the problem of human life on its limited territory reads stranger and more thrillingly in many respects than a romance. But most, if not all, of the tales told and books printed have either been too fragmentary or incorrect and misleading. It will be interesting to the friends of that miniature world to know that an authentic history has been written, and that by a native of the island, one to the manor born. Miss Rosa Young is one of the direct descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*. The book is a plain, unvarnished tale of Pitcairn and its inhabitants, from its settlement to the year 1894. It is written with a charming simplicity of style which refreshes the reader and invites a continued perusal. Illustrated with 26 engravings by the half-tone process, and its 23 chapters have each a neatly engraved heading. Third edition, with appendix. Price, \$1.00.

PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING CO., Oakland, Cal.

39 Bond Street, New York City

14 to 18 W. 5th St., Kansas City, Mo.

Young People's Library

SERIES ONE



HIS Library covers a wide range of topics and territory, being didactic, descriptive, biographical, and historical. While the books inculcate the purest morals and are not antichristian, they are absolutely non-sectarian.

A series of volumes which has been widely and deservedly popular.—*Christian at Work.*

Send for press notices recommending these books. We have them from *Christian at Work*, *Christian Cynosure*, *The Independent*, *Congregationalist*, *Lutheran Observer*, *Christian Intelligencer*, *Illustrated Christian Weekly*, *Interior*, *New York Observer*, *Golden Rule*, *Christian Oracle*, *New York Weekly Witness*, *Zion's Herald*, and *The Christian Weekly*.

New York Observer, *Golden Rule*, *Christian Oracle*, *New York Weekly Witness*, *Zion's Herald*, and *The Christian Weekly*.

FIJI AND SAMOA—*JOTTINGS FROM THE PACIFIC*, No. 1, is a graphic and interesting description of the Fijian and Samoan Islands, their geographical position, their government and religion, their social and physical peculiarities, the wonderful productions of these islands, the coral formations of the Pacific, cannibalism, the curious traditions of the islands, the past and present funeral rites, cyclones in the Coral Seas, and many other things of interest.

JACK THE CONQUEROR: or Overcoming Difficulties, and other stories. These are not light, trashy, improbable tales, but they present some of the real difficulties which nearly all boys and girls are compelled to encounter, and point out the best way to meet them, so as to make the difficulties *aids* to higher attainments instead of *hindrances*. The book will not only interest but benefit the young.

SAVONAROLA—The life of this great preacher of Florence. The scene of the book is of course in that land of romance and song and heroism, Italia, where the Apostle Paul and other witnesses of the truth finished the "good fight of faith." The little volume is a graphic sketch of the most prominent events of the preacher's life and experience, the monasticism of the fifteenth century, the iniquities that prevailed, the political influence of Savonarola, his trial and death.

THE TONGA ISLANDS AND OTHER GROUPS—*JOTTINGS FROM THE PACIFIC*, No. 2. The islands of the Pacific always furnish fascinating topics for young readers, and old ones too. Scenic descriptions, the character and customs of the people, the progress of Christianity, the products of the islands, and historic incidents are all told in an interesting and instructive manner.

LETTERS FROM THE HOLY LAND is a most interesting little work. It gives, in a series of letters of a father to his children, interesting accounts, accompanied by a large number of full-page pen sketches and illustrated chapter headings of Eastern life and manners, which will help greatly in a better understanding of many things given in the Bible. The stories are told in simple language which a child can understand, and at the same time are of interest to those of mature years. The book contains an appendix of sixteen pages, giving a good description of the geography of the Holy Land, with an outline map.

AMONG THE NORTHERN ICEBERGS—In this book we are taken to the northland, where King Frost reigns supreme, releasing only for a little time, now and then, his icy grip that he may more securely fasten upon those helpless mariners who wander within his domain. The book gives most interesting sketches of the Arctic expeditions of England and our own land in the nineteenth century. The rising generation will appreciate the reading of this account second only to those who read the graphic narrations at the times of their occurrence,

Series 1, 6 volumes, cloth, in a box, \$3.00; single volumes, cloth, 60c; single volumes, paper, 25c.

SERIES TWO

A set of six volumes of interesting reading, comprising Instructive Moral Tales, Biography and History, and designed especially for Youth.

LEFT WITH A TRUST is a story of the struggles of a family to help "mother" and each other during the absence of the father, and pleasantly reveals the brighter side of youth where there is a worthy purpose and a will to be kind and affectionate.

TWO CANNIBAL ARCHIPELAGOES—A graphic description of the New Hebrides and Solomon Islands. The luxuriance of their vegetation, the strange phases of animal life, the volcanoes and other natural curiosities, the manners and customs of the people, and the efforts to civilize and Christianize them, are all told in a lively and most entertaining style.

JOHN OF WYCLIFFE—"The Morning-star of the Reformation." Every reader of the English Bible owes a debt of gratitude to this man, who had so much to do with placing the Scriptures in the hands of the people. The writer has sketched in striking outlines the great controversies of the times and the part that was taken in them by Wycliffe.

NATIVE LIFE IN INDIA—A most interesting description of the social and religious characteristics of the Hindus. The writer of this book spent eighteen years in India. The book is fully illustrated with cuts that are made from native sketches.

MARTIN LUTHER—The name of this great reformer is well known in every household, and this story of his life, at home, at the university, as a monk, as a priest, at Rome, at the Diet of Worms, and finally the closing scenes of his eventful career, will be of deep interest to the young.

LIFE ON THE KONGO—This short, though comprehensive, story of the new-old empire of the Kongo, in many respects the choicest portion of the "Dark Continent," can not fail to interest young and old. The information given has the merit of being the product of the personal observation of the author and other well-known parties who have traversed the country which is so graphically described.

Each volume contains 160 pages, is fully illustrated, and neatly bound in cloth.

Series 2, 6 volumes, cloth, in a box, \$3.00; single volumes, cloth, 60c; single volumes, paper, 25c.

This series of books we unhesitatingly commend. They have been thoroughly examined and we know them to be valuable.

Pacific Press Publishing Company

New York City, N. Y.

Oakland, Cal.

Kansas City, Mo.

02 Natal Transvaal Tract Society
St. Louis Mo.
Mariburg

wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men."¹⁴ Solomon's understanding was such that all the kings of the earth sought him for the wisdom which God had given him.¹⁵ Solomon was then doing what the Lord desired Israel to do all the time; that is, he was teaching the nations the truth. He built the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, and brought the ark of God and all the vessels of the sanctuary into the temple, and dedicated them to the Lord. After that the service of the sanctuary was carried on in the temple. In the first half of Solomon's reign the kingdom of Israel reached its highest point of glory.

But Satan overcame the wisest king by causing him to marry idolatrous wives. "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. . . . Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon."¹⁶ It seems that he did all this to please the idolaters. He was a great lover of peace, and early in his reign he made a covenant of peace with Pharaoh king of Egypt. Besides Egypt, Solomon united with his court, Moab, Edom, Zidon, Ammon, and many other countries. All praised and flattered Solomon, and continued to do so until he was old. Then his wives, who were idolaters before they came to his court, persuaded him to build these places of idol-worship for

¹⁴ 1 Kings 4:29-37.¹⁵ See 2 Chron. 9:23.¹⁶ 1 Kings 11:4-7.