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**SEMI-MONTHLY
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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

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Those of the *interested* who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER, will be supplied FREE, if they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually.

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GENERAL CONVENTION, NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. JULY 8-11

The RAILROADS of the New England, Trunk Lines, Central, Western and South-Western Associations, the C.P.R. and G.T.R. in Ontario, and the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Co. will sell tickets to this Convention at ONE FARE AND ONE-THIRD, plus 25 cents, on the "Certificate Plan." You purchase a regular single-fare ticket to Niagara Falls, N.Y., telling your ticket-agent at the time that you are going to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY'S CONVENTION, that you desire a Certificate, and which will entitle you to purchase a return ticket at ONE-THIRD a regular fare. Hold on to that certificate, as without it you would be charged full fare when buying your return ticket. The Certificates will need to be signed, but we will publicly announce at the Convention the name of the brother who will attend to the matter for you and save you all trouble.

ACCOMMODATIONS should be secured in advance to avoid confusion and trouble to yourself and the Entertainment Committee. Therefore, if you will attend, write at once, saying BRIEFLY (a) how many will be of your party; (b) how many of each sex; (c) if colored, so state; (d) married couples desirous of rooming together should so state. AS TO RATES.—Arrangements can be made for accommodations in boarding houses at \$1 to \$1.25 per day and at hotels at \$1.50 per day up. These rates include meals.

Do not write on this subject AT LENGTH. Tell us about things at the Convention. Give the information briefly and to the point. A postal card will do. Address the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, 612 Arch St., Allegheny, Pa.

OTHER EXCURSIONS

From many points there are other Special Excursions run every summer to Niagara Falls. Some of these are at extremely low rates. It will be well for each to inquire of the railway ticket agents of his own city on this subject, and to select the excursion that will suit his convenience best. But take our own Excursion mentioned above unless you can do BETTER.

GET READY PROPERLY

Prepare your heart for a blessing. Come to the Convention in the proper spirit—as a disciple, a learner. Come intent also on doing good as well as getting good, of consoling and encouraging others, as well as to be yourself comforted. Above all, come realizing that the Lord himself is the fountain of blessings, and remembering his word—not by might, nor by power, but by the Lord's Spirit are we to expect the blessings we hope for. In making ready and en route do not forget this important item, for on it your share in the Convention's blessing greatly depends.

THE VOLUNTEER LITERATURE

This year's "ammunition," consisting of four short tracts folded together as one, seems to please all. We advise that it be not divided up, but given out as you receive it. On the other hand we find that some dear friends give out too many tracts, etc., at once. They get from us all the various kinds and make up packages of one each and give them thus to their friends. This is a mistake. We send freely what you request, but with the understanding that you will select for your friends the most suitable to their conditions. It is a mistake to send such bundles of tracts. The person who might read one tract is likely to discard all if he receives a bundle. Use plenty of tracts, but use them wisely. Ten tracts sent separately at intervals are apt to do a thousand times as much good as those sent all at once.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

REV. E. L. EATON, D.D., ON THE CHURCH OF TODAY

WE feel a keen interest in Dr. Eaton, with whom, it will be remembered, we had a friendly debate about two years ago. We keep hoping to note some influence from our Scriptural arguments showing that not the reformation and conversion of the world is the Lord's program for this Gospel age, but rather the selection or election of a "little flock," the Church, the Royal Priesthood, through whom under Jesus their High Priest all the world shall be mentally, morally and physically assisted out of present degradation and death conditions to life-everlasting privileges.

We see little sign that Dr. Eaton has fully accepted our position, but in a recent sermon he seemed to have a clear view of *the nominal church*, as separate and distinct from the true Church composed only of "*the few precious and godly men and women that can be found in all churches,*" so that we may not yet abandon hope for a further opening of the eyes of his understanding. He certainly cannot hope that the nominal mass of "Christendom" can ever "save the world" to any higher standard than its own. Yet here are his own words describing Churchianity, exactly reproduced:—

"What is the exact state of the Church? I do not mean North Avenue church. I do not mean the few precious and godly men and women that can be found in all churches. I mean the entire Christian establishment in these United States. What is its condition to-day? From what I have seen during the last dozen years, and from what I constantly read, I am persuaded that the Church, with all its wealth and culture and prestige, is not leading the procession. It is not advancing as fast as our population is advancing. It is in a state of moral dearth, a spiritual dry-rot prevails all too generally. It is not winning the unsaved in great numbers. It has not seen a sweeping revival in thirty years. Its ministry—probably more than half of them—are willing to admit that the days of revivals are past, and that our only hope now is to try to save the children; that there is not power enough in the Church, the preaching, nor in the Gospel to save a grown-up sinner any more. We are not looking for great and all-inundating revivals as of yore.

"The Church has generally become a social club, so nice and respectable and so fine that the poor do not feel at home in it, and the working men have turned their backs upon it almost from one end of the country to the other. And, next to the quarter of a million of America's licensed saloons,

the saddest fact in America to-day is the alienation of the poor and the laboring classes from the Church! The climax of the catalogue of Gospel blessings which our Lord sent to John the Baptist in prison to comfort his sore heart was "To the poor the Gospel is preached!" But the Church is not reaching the poor, nor the rich in great numbers, not the submerged one-tenth, nor the criminals, nor the fast young men and women that swarm in saloons and club rooms, crowding them to suffocation these Sunday afternoons and nights.

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"But this state of things does not greatly disturb the Church. The majority of it is satisfied, apathetic, indifferent. It has not moral earnestness nor spiritual vim enough to attend Church, if at all, but once a day on Sunday, and prayer-meetings never. It has no testimony except a daily life that is exactly on the plane of the world. It has not fervency. It is cold. Its sentiments upon every question of morals is exactly the sentiment of the world about it. Its Bible is the daily newspapers. Its Sunday reading is the Sunday press. It is not looking for a revival. It does not want one. It don't enjoy that kind of entertainment. It prefers generally to spend its long winter evenings in the theatre. It prefers to see the half-dressed ballet dancers than to witness the wrestling of a lost soul at the altar of the Church. It prefers opera music to the song of Moses and the Lamb, and wants it brought into the Church on Sundays to crowd out the old fervent soul-stirring melodies that used to take our fathers and mothers by the hand and lead them up to the very gates of glory. That is the mental and moral state of the Church as it is represented by more than half of its members to-day. Revivals! The last thing on earth that it is thinking of, looking for, or desiring.

"But this is not all. The Church has not seriously attacked a moral reform in forty years! The social evil is spreading beyond anything ever before known. The Lord's day is desecrated until in some parts of the country it is entirely wiped out. Civic crime and municipal corruption are engulfing our cities, until every great city in this country is a cess-pool of political rottenness and crime. And the increase of saloons, drink and drunkenness for the past thirty years is appalling and phenomenal. Yet with all this, the Church utterly disclaims any responsibility, and is either indifferent or utterly unwilling to raise a protesting voice, or even to vote against it. Probably not five per cent. of the voting church will register its protest on next Tuesday against the saloon, which is the center, source, inspiration and procuring cause of seven-eighths of all this moral devastation and retrogression. The Church of Jesus Christ must wake up and

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attack these problems and lift this country *out of the stark heathenism toward which we are fast drifting*, as the early Church lifted the old Roman civilization out of its social wickedness and its national sins, or we are gone without hope and without remedy."

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION—WILL OUR PRESBYTERIAN FRIENDS REPUDIATE IT?

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, which met a few weeks ago at Winona Lake, Ind., discussed the overtures made by the presbytery of Nassau, L.I., to drop the Westminster confession of faith and substitute therefor the brief statement of the reformed faith. Between the conservatives and radicals there occurred a very lively discussion.

This was recently adopted by the General Assembly as a brief statement, but not as a creed of the Church, the old confession, known as the Westminster confession, which contains many doctrines that have caused sharp controversies between clergymen, being retained.

PLEADS FOR REFORM

The Rev. Dr. Samuel T. Carter, New York City, last September sent an open letter to the presbytery at Nassau which attracted wide attention. He assailed certain doctrines "received by the Church, but not generally believed." The reading of the letter at the Presbyterian meeting at Oyster Bay precipitated a discussion over the statements it contained.

The controversy continued until the next meeting, held in December. It was believed that Dr. Carter might be tried for heresy, but after appearing before the presbytery at Nassau and making an eloquent appeal for the truth and the dropping of misstatements, however, time honored, he triumphed in that instead of trying him for heresy the presbytery voted to make overtures to the General Assembly to drop the Westminster confession.

DR. CARTER'S STATEMENT

A statement has been given out by Dr. Carter, in which he says:

"The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church meets in the month of May. The presbytery of Nassau asks it to take the necessary steps towards dropping the Westminster confession and adopting the brief statement of the reformed faith, the simple and kindlier creed which has already been indorsed by the Church.

"The General Assembly can reject the petition more or less courteously. But can it afford to do so? It is important to rid the Church of bad creed, but still more important to dispel from the minds of men the gloomy ideas of religion which go with the old creeds and most of all the dreadful dogma of endless torment which has caused such intense suffering.

CONDEMNS BEFORE BIRTH

“The secular press has thus far treated the matter so courteously and sympathetically that I feel it to be a privilege to present my appeal before the public through it. The Westminster confession presents for the worship and allegiance of man a God who, according to the good pleasure of his will, has assigned millions of the human race to endless torment before they were born or had done good or ill.

“Of this number a large proportion died in infancy and committed no personal transgression. The whole heathen world formed another large company. By the teachings of the confession Homer and Virgil, Plato and Socrates, Cato and Antonius, Confucius and Gautama are at this moment roasting in the literal flames of hell fire and shall so burn forever and ever.

“Has the Presbyterian Church the face to make this declaration to men in this generation? The Westminster confession, in fact, says that God is a monster; modern theology says he is not. In this sentence lies the whole gist of the confession.

REJECTS GOD OF CONFESSION

“Every fibre of my moral being rises up against this God who dishonors theology; with the utmost fervor in my soul I reject this God of the confession, and as fully as I reject this God, so gladly do I receive the God of the gospel, Jesus Christ.

“The father in the great parable, who runs forth to meet his wretched, but repenting son, falls upon his neck and kisses him. Sham theology is sure to make sham religion, and sham religion is sure to lead to the horrors of the Roman empire and the French revolution, to the eruption of the human volcano.

“It has been well said, ‘Repelled light becomes lightning.’ Of such a state of affairs as this, Martineau sadly says: ‘Will not bad creed, then, be got rid of? Not a bit; and year after year thousands of clergymen will solemnly profess before tens of thousands of assenting people a creed which is false to the heart of them all.’

“This is what they are doing in the Presbyterian Church to-day. The General Assembly will do nothing so good as to make an end of it. It is more seriously important than sending missionaries to China. There is no use of sending truth abroad if we live a lie at home.”

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BEREAN BIBLE STUDY FOR JULY

—(SEE PREFACE OF WATCH TOWER BIBLES)—

PATIENCE

1. What is the importance of Patience as an element of Christian character? Jas. 1:4; Z.'02-308 (1st col. par. 2); Z.'02-247, (2nd col. par. 2); Z.'01-119 (2nd col. par. 2).
2. What is the common significance of this word? See Webster's Dictionary; also Z.'01-115 (1st col. par. 2).
3. What is the deeper significance of this word as used in Scripture, especially in Rev. 3:10 and Luke 8:15? Z.'01-115 (1st and 2nd cols.)
4. Why is "patient-endurance" so *necessary*? Z.'01-116 (2nd col. par. 1,2).
5. What is the relation between patient-endurance and *self-control*? 2 Pet. 1:6; Z.'96-222 (1st col. par. 1).
6. How should we endure our trials and thus "possess our souls"? Luke 21:19; Z.'01-116 (1st col. par. 2,3).
7. What is the relation between *faith* and patient-endurance? Jas. 1:3; Z.'01-117 (2nd col. par. 1); Z.'03-361 (1st col. par. 3) Z.'03-362 (2nd col. par. 2).
8. Why should we "glory in tribulation"? Rom. 5:3; Z.'00-364 (2nd col. par. 1,2); Z.'02-380 (2nd col. par. 2); Z.'03-439 (2nd col. par. 1,2).
9. What particular thoughts constantly kept in mind will enable us to be "patient in tribulation"? Rom. 12:12; Z.'97-265 (2nd col. par. 1); Z.'98-41 (1st col. par. 1,2); F.632, (par. 2) to 634, (par. 2).
10. Does faithfulness to our covenant of self-sacrifice demand patience? Z.'03-408 (1st col. par. 3).
11. How should we meet persecution and opposition? 1 Pet. 2:20-23; Z.'03-164 (2nd col. par. 2); Z.'96-83 (2nd col. par. 2).

12. How can we be “patient toward *all*”? 1 Thess. 5:14; Z.’03-24, (1st col. par. 2); F.306,307.
13. Why is there *special need of* patience in the Harvest of the Gospel age? Z.’97-148 (1st col. par. 2); Z.’01-119 (1st and 2nd cols.)
14. Is it possible to *pervert* the grace of patience? Eph. 5:11; Z.’97-148 (1st col. par. 1).
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15. Why does the Apostle rank patient-endurance above even *Love*? Titus 2:2; 2 Tim. 3:10; Z.’00-332 (1st and 2nd cols.); Z.’01-116 (2nd col. par. 3); Z.’01-117 (1st col. par. 2,3).
16. What is the relation between patience and “enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ”? 1 Pet. 5:10; Z.’95-202 (2nd col. par. 1).
17. How are we to run the race for “the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus”? Heb. 12:1; 6:12; Z.’01-117 (2nd col. par. 3); Z.’03-54 (1st col. par. 4).
18. Why is patient-endurance the *final test*? Heb. 10:36; C.212, par. 1; Z.’01-115 (2nd col. par. 1); 116 (1st col. par. 1); 117 (2nd col. par. 1).
19. How is God’s promise to those who “keep the word of his patience” now fulfilled? Rev. 3:10; Z.’01-118 (1st and 2nd cols.)
20. What lessons do we learn from Jesus’ example of patience? Heb. 12:3; Z.’98-160 (2nd col. par. 3); Z.’01-298 (1st col. par. 1,2); Z.’00-119 (1st col. par. 1); Z.’05-120 (1st col. par. 3).
21. What other notable examples of patience are recorded in Scripture? Jas. 5:10,11; 2 Cor. 6:4-10; 2 Cor. 12:12.
22. Is patience an essential quality in an Elder? 1 Tim. 3:3; F.251, par. 2; F.298, par. 1,2.
23. How can we *cultivate* patient-endurance? a. By prayer, Z.’96-163 (1st and 2nd cols.) b. By growing in knowledge, Z.’03-24 (1st col. par. 2). c. By increasing our faith, Z.’03-361 (1st col. par. 3). d. By recognizing the *time-element* in God’s plans. Z.’97-147 (2nd col. par. 3); Z.’01-118 (2nd col. par. 2).
24. What additional thoughts are suggested by reference to the Topical Indexes of “Heavenly Manna” and the “Watch Tower Bible”?

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MAKE SURE OF WINNING IN GOD'S ELECTION

**“Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.”—2
Pet. 1:10.**

INTEREST in the recent election of a President of the United States has been general throughout the whole world, and especially amongst English-speaking peoples: in fact, the exercise of the franchise by the public, whenever and wherever, is generally a matter of absorbing interest to “the children of this world”—whether the office be a high one, as that of President of the United States, or Member of Congress, or Member of Parliament, or whether it be a lower one, for some petty office of ward magistrate or constable. The candidates for these offices and their friends, in proportion to the dignity of the office, do not hesitate to spend money for printing, brass bands, banners, flags, banquets, traveling speakers, etc. And this is looked upon as thoroughly reasonable, and engaged in by the reputedly more intelligent and sane of all nations. But there is another election in progress—an election of a hundred and forty-four thousand to a higher position than that of any earthly magistrate or potentate; and for not a few years merely, for the elect are promised this highest of all honors for all eternity.

Does the world know about this election? We answer, No. True, many have heard something about an election—that God is “taking out of the nations a people for his name,” a “little flock,” who, as joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, will be given the Kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him,—the Kingdom for which we pray, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” But though they have heard of this Kingdom and the election now in progress, to make up the foreordained number of its kings and priests, they do not really believe it, but regard it as a fantasy, “as a tale that is told,” a fairy story, which none but the simple-minded and children would take seriously. Ah, yes! and so the Redeemer-King informed us it would be; and so he prayed to the Father, saying, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.”—Matt. 11:25,26.

If the wise and prudent, the keen and the shrewd, the learned and the great, really comprehended the situation,—if they really believed in this election which is in progress under divine direction, according to the divine Word, what haste there would be amongst them to “make their calling and

election sure," as the Apostle exhorts. It is not that people are not appreciative of such honors and dignities of power and influence as this Kingdom offers, that they pass by God's election and treat it with indifference; for their love of power, their love of influence, their love of position and prestige, is abundantly in evidence in connection, not only with the governments of this world, but also in connection with even the trifling offices in the nominal churches. The spirit of "Which shall be greatest?" has apparently not died out.

But while those who seek for earthly offices of a brief tenure and comparatively small dignity are willing to sacrifice time, energy, money, etc., to attain these petty offices and honors, and while they can arouse enthusiasm among their friends and neighbors, leading to the expenditure of time, money and energy to an astounding degree, and though they think it strange that we "run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of us" (1 Pet. 4:4), nevertheless, they affect to think it remarkable that we who are candidates for the superlatively high office for which God has nominated us should spend time, influence and means in making our calling and election sure, and in assisting "brethren" in their election work; they consider our time wasted. Although they spend millions of dollars in speeches, brass bands, editorials, parades, etc., to determine which of two men should hold the most honorable office of this nation for four years, they consider it remarkably strange that we should spend a fragment of the amount or make the one-thousandth part of the commotion to secure for *ourselves* and to all of the "elect" the great "prize of our high calling."

DIFFERENT STANDPOINT—DIFFERENT VIEW

All this only illustrates the two very different standpoints from which matters may be viewed. From the world's standpoint the Lord's consecrated people who seek to make their calling and election sure to the heavenly Kingdom are counted fools, because to

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attain that they are willing to sacrifice present temporal interests; and this sentiment of the public is the same today that it was in the Apostle's time, when he wrote, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise, in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise." (1 Cor. 3:18; 4:10.) From our standpoint, seeing the eternal things and the glories attaching to them, we cannot avoid the feeling that it is "the children of this world" who are foolish, in that they expend so much breath and energy upon things which, if attained, last but a short time, and bring with them large measures of perplexity and trouble and criticism of opponents to their election: and sometimes untellable injury to themselves, the ruled.

But why this difference of opinion? Which party is sane, and which is lacking in sanity? We answer,

that the difference is that the one class sees what the other class does not see, and that because God has specially revealed it unto the one. As it is written, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man [the natural man, unilluminated by the holy Spirit] the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him; but God hath *revealed them unto us* by his Spirit, ... which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”—1 Cor. 2:9,10.

The fact, then, is that the Lord’s consecrated people, through faith and by God’s holy Spirit, have inside information respecting “the things not seen as yet.” Hence we see that the two parties—the one seeking earthly honors and advantages, for themselves and each other, the other seeking the heavenly advantages, or election, for themselves and each other—are both laboring for what they see, for what they consider to be the most valuable thing they see and may attain. O, how precious, then, is the eye of faith, which the Lord’s consecrated people have! No wonder our Lord said to some of his disciples, “Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears, for they hear.” Other eyes do not see and other ears do not hear these heavenly things. And in that sense of the word comparatively few even in civilized lands have been called or *nominated* of the Lord for his election—comparatively few know anything about it or the terms which must be understood and obeyed in order to make the calling and election sure.

IGNORANCE RESPECTING GOD’S ELECTION

Even amongst professing Protestant Christians the majority do not know that there is an election. The leading denomination, Methodists, positively deny that there is an election; and even the large denominations which hold that an election is in progress (Presbyterians and Baptists, etc.) have totally false conceptions of its character. They regard God’s call or nomination as being the election itself, and hence the words of the Apostle in our text confuse rather than help them. They think of the matter from the standpoint of divine foreknowledge and predestination; they consider the election as something done by the Almighty wholly regardless of the character and works of the elect, saying in their Confessions of Faith that it takes place without consideration of any worthiness or merit on the part of the elect, but solely of divine grace. They thus make void the Word of God

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and the election inducements which it holds out—confusing their own minds, and in the end traducing the character of the divine ruler and his law.

Would that they could see what is so plainly set forth in the divine Word, *viz.*: (1) That the predestination on God’s part was that he would choose a Church,—from amongst those whom his grace would redeem from the curse of death through the precious blood of Christ. (2) That he

predestinated that this Church should be of a fixed, positive, limited number;—we believe literally 144,000—of whom the nucleus was found in the remnant of Israel which accepted of Christ at and after Pentecost—the number being constantly added to throughout the Gospel age, and to be fully completed with the end of this age. (3) That he predestinated what must be the fixed character of each one whom he would recognize as a member of this elect Church, the body of Christ—as the Apostle says, he “predestinated that we should be conformed to the likeness of his Son.” (Rom. 8:29.) Consequently the predestination meant that none could be of the elect Kingdom class (however plainly they heard the call or nomination) unless they made their calling and election sure by cultivating the graces of the Spirit and thus coming into heart-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ—copies of him who set us an example, that we should walk in his steps.—1 Pet. 2:21.

Here we have an election which accords with every definition of the Scriptures and the Scriptural facts relating to the divine plan of the ages. It is this election which we feel justified in securing at any cost, at any self-denial, at any self-sacrifice; and these self-denials and self-sacrifices are *works* which must be performed if we would be of the elect; as the Apostle says, we *must* “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12; Jas. 2:22.) Yet these works are not ours (as men) but as “new creatures,” members of the body of Christ. And they are God’s works, in the sense that they are incited by his Word and Spirit, for “it is God that *worketh* in you to will and to do.”—Phil. 2:13; Eph. 3:20.

Let us not be misunderstood, however. Our justification, the *basis* of our call or nomination to this high position in the Kingdom was secured, not by works, but by simple faith without works. We were justified by faith, and had peace with God, before it was possible for us to do any works which would be acceptable in his sight. But when we were accepted in the Beloved, having made full consecration of our mortal bodies, and every interest pertaining thereto, then the works began, the sacrificing began, the self-denials began, the overcoming of the world began, the battle with the world, the flesh and the devil began. This battle must be won in our hearts (even though we will not attain perfection in the flesh) else we will not make our election sure and receive the crown of glory, the symbol of our joint-heirship with him who bought us with his own precious blood.

So, then, we see (a) that only those who have heard something at least of the grace of God in Christ have been in the remotest sense in contact with the privileges of this election—because “faith cometh by hearing.” And (b) faith, the result of hearing, rightly received, brings justification from the sins that are past, and peace with God. And (c) only those who are at peace with God (being justified by faith) are

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called to joint-heirship with Christ in his sacrifice, walking in his footsteps and thus attaining to joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom. And (d) only those thus called or nominated by God have the remotest opportunity of becoming the elect. And then mark, (e) the Lord's own declaration, "Many are called; few are chosen [elected—from the same Greek word]."—Matt. 22:14.

Let us not only assure ourselves of the fact that there is an elect class being selected during the Gospel age, to a special position of honor and service with the Lord, but let us at the same time note the lessons enjoined upon this class of called or nominated ones—the instructions given them of the Lord whereby they may make their calling and election sure.

OTHER SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO THE ELECT

"I endure all things for the *elect's* sake," writes the Apostle Paul. (2 Tim. 2:10.) The Apostle's sufferings whereby, as he said, he sought to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ [were] for his body's sake, which is the Church" (Col. 1:24)—not for the world. The reason for this is evident: The Apostle knew the Lord's plan to be to call and to elect during this Gospel age a little flock of overcomers of the world, faithful even unto death, as a Royal Priesthood, to share with the Lord Jesus in the Millennial Kingdom. He knew, therefore, that labor on behalf of the world before the world's day of trial or judgment would come, would be to a large extent at least love's labor lost; and hence he was not of those who would "beat the air" in the service of the Lord, accomplishing nothing; he would work according to the divine direction and thus be a co-worker together with God, that in due time as a member of the elect company, faithful to the Lord's call, he would be granted a share in the Kingdom which is to bless all the families of the earth.

ELECTION ACCORDING TO GRACE

"Even so, at this present time there is an **election** according to grace. ... Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the *election* hath obtained it and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:5,7.) Here the Apostle is speaking of this same elect Church, and is referring to the Jewish remnant out of all the tribes with which this elect Church was started, and to which, after Israel's national rejection of the Lord, the special invitation went forth to the Gentiles, to "take out of them a people for his name [to bear the name of Christ]" to complete the predestinated number of the elect 144,000 (twelve thousand *accredited* to each of the twelve tribes of Israel). Thus we who are being called from amongst the Gentiles are invited to fill up the deficiency in the elect number of Israel, and will be, so to speak, divided amongst the twelve tribes, tho according to what rule of distinction the Scriptures do not show.

GOD'S ELECT, HOLY AND BELOVED

“Put on, therefore, as God’s *elect*, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another.” (Col. 3:12,13.) Here we have an intimation of the character-likeness to God’s dear Son which the same writer tells us God has predestinated respecting everyone who will make his calling and election sure.—Rom. 8:29.

God has called us with his high calling, and from the time we accept the call and make requisite full consecration of ourselves to him he gives us the earnest of our inheritance, viz., the spirit of adoption, the spirit of sonship: it remains, however, for us to be tested,—to prove the depth of our consecration, the sincerity of our professed love. If we love the Lord with all our hearts we will seek to do these things which are pleasing to him, and these the Apostle is specifying in this Scripture, showing us that God’s requirements are all in harmony with his holy spirit of love; that “Love is the fulfilling of the Law,” and that we must attain to this condition of perfect love in our hearts if we desire to finish our course with joy, and make our calling and election sure—making sure a share in the inheritance to the spiritual body and the Kingdom glories of which our spirit of begetting is but the earnest or foretaste.

THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT

“Paul, a servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s *elect*.” (Titus 1:1.) Here the Apostle not only reiterates that there is an elect class, but he specifically points out that this class has a special faith, a peculiar faith, that is not shared by others, neither can others know it, for “it is spiritually discerned.”—1 Cor. 2:14.

AVENGE HIS OWN ELECT

Shall not God avenge his own *elect*, tho they cry day and night unto him?” (Luke 18:7.) Here our Lord himself testifies respecting this elect class. He gave a parable of an unjust judge, who, tho careless respecting the doing of justice to a poor widow, nevertheless was so careful of his own convenience that he would give her justice, lest by her continual coming she would annoy him. And our Lord’s inquiry is, if an unjust judge would thus render justice from a selfish motive, could we expect less from the all-wise, all-loving and all-just Heavenly Father? Verily, God shall avenge the cause of his elect, *altho* he has permitted them to be maligned, slandered, misrepresented, for over eighteen centuries; the time will come when he will give them justice, when he will exalt them; and when those who have wilfully and maliciously injured them shall certainly be punished—in the great time of retribution in which every such evil deed of mankind shall be rendered a recompense, and every good deed receive its reward—in the Millennial day.

GATHER TOGETHER HIS ELECT

“He shall send forth his angels [messengers]

and shall gather together his *elect* from the four winds of heaven.” (Matt. 24:31.) Here our Lord not only testifies to the fact that there is an elect class, but he assures us that he himself will gather this elect class in due time; in the end of this age when he is ready to establish his Kingdom, in which, as the overcomers, the elect of God, they will be joint heirs and sharers, as in the present life they have been sharers in the sufferings of Christ.—Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Matt. 13:43.

FOR THE ELECT’S SAKE

Those days shall be shortened.” (Matt. 24:22.) Our Lord here refers to the great time of trouble

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with which this age shall end, “the day of vengeance,” the time of retribution, the day of avenging his elect; and he assures us that the trouble then coming upon the world, and which will largely, we see, be brought about by the world’s own course, would, if not interrupted by the Kingdom and its intervention with power from on high, mean the utter obliteration of the race at the hand of its own selfishness. But for the elect’s sake those days should be shortened, and the time of trouble will not be permitted to run the length which otherwise it would run. As at first, “He shall speak to them in his wrath and vex them in his sore displeasure,” so afterward he shall not permit their utter destruction: his Kingdom will stay the trouble, for “He shall speak peace to the heathen [peoples];” he shall say unto them, “Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”—Psa. 46:10.

THE ELECT ARE UNCONDEMNED

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s *elect*?” (Rom. 8:33.) The Apostle is here pointing out that altho this called class accepted of God to be his elect, and to run with patience the race set before them, and make their calling and election sure, have weaknesses of the flesh, in the overcoming of which they, as new creatures, are not always wholly successful, nevertheless, God looks upon the heart, and their judgment is not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the will. Lest such should fear failure after all, he points out that in the great heavenly court there would be none to condemn them;—because God the judge who once condemned us in Adam has himself justified us in Christ,—accepting on behalf of the Adamic sin and the resultant weaknesses the sacrifice of Christ. He then points out that Satan, our Adversary, will have no hearing before

the heavenly Court, and that there will be none to appear against us, and that on the contrary our Lord and Master, who redeemed us with his precious blood, will be our Advocate. Who then could lay anything to the charge of God's elect?—those whom God has justified, whom God has called, whom God has accepted, and who, according to the divine arrangement, make their calling and election sure. Who would they be who could find fault with these whom God accepts on his own terms? Surely none! “Yea, we are more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood!”

THE ELECT FOREKNOWN

“*Elect*, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father ... through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 1:2.) The Apostle here marks out the terms of our election; none can remain in this elect company, nor make his calling and election sure, without being under the sprinkling of the blood—justification through faith in the great sacrifice; nor can any attain it without sanctification, a setting apart to God; and such a sanctification as will lead to obedience to God—to the full submission of his will to the will of the Father in heaven.

Such must be the character of those who will be of the elect, and this class of which we are seeking to become members was predetermined, foreordained by God; it was not a new thing, but the carrying out of the original divine purpose, in which also our Lord Jesus shared. This the same Apostle shows (1 Pet. 2:4-6), declaring that our Lord Jesus himself was the elect of God, and that we who are now being chosen from amongst men to be “members of the body of Christ,” members of the elect class, are chosen in him, chosen as members of his body, and as such must be conformed to the likeness of his character. He says: “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but *chosen* [*elect*] of God and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up, a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices* acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

*The word *spiritual* is omitted in this verse as spurious by old MSS. The *flesh* is sacrificed, not the new creature.

“Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, *elect*, precious, and he that believeth in him shall not be confounded.” (1 Pet. 2:6.) Thus the Church of Christ, the elect little flock, are now being shaped, fitted and prepared for positions in the Temple of God, of which the dear Redeemer himself is the chief cornerstone, the foundation.

“They that are with him are called and *chosen* [*elect*—the same word in the Greek] and faithful.” (Rev. 17:14.) Here in symbol our Lord Jesus tells John, and us through him, of the glorious exaltation of the elect in the Kingdom, when they shall be with him and share his glory as the Apostle declares, and with him judge the world;—granting trial, with gracious opportunities to every member of Adam’s race to return to full harmony with God through the merit and by the assistance of him who redeemed the race.

GOD DELIGHTS IN HIS ELECT

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine *elect*, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” “I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob and out of Judah, an inheritor of my mountain: and mine *elect* shall inherit it.” “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 make them continue long.”—Isa. 42:1; 65:9,22, margin.

Here our Lord Jesus, the Head, and the Church, “members in particular of the body of Christ,” are unitedly declared to be God’s elect, in whom he is well pleased. The Father was well pleased in the Son, who came not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him, and by his obedience won all the gracious things promised under the Law Covenant, and redeemed Adam and his race; and the Father is well pleased also in us, whom, tho “we were children of wrath even as others,” he has accepted in Christ, justified and sanctified by his Word and spirit, and who, if we abide in Christ, faithful unto death, will be fitted and prepared for his promised Kingdom.

In these statements of the Prophet reference evidently is made to the work of the Lord’s anointed (Head and Body) in conferring restitution blessings upon the world of mankind during the Millennial age; and this in full accord with all the New Testament declarations respecting the work of the elect.

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STRIVE FOR YOUR ELECTION

“Brethren give diligence to make your calling and *election* sure.” This our text is one of the most forceful of the many references to God’s elect, and is particularly clear in marking out the conditions upon which election may be surely attained by each one whom the Lord our God shall *call* or *nominate* to this grand office—the Royal Priesthood. The Apostle has been mentioning the various graces of the Lord’s spirit which those who are seeking to be of his royal and priestly class must develop in their characters. He shows us that there is more or less of an addition in the matter: we put on one grace and add to it another, and to that another, and so on; and do this

repeatedly in respect to all the graces, which keep growing, developing in us and rounding out and deepening and broadening us as spiritual new creatures. And he shows that those who do not have such experiences of growth in grace and in knowledge are deficient, and cannot hope to make their calling and election sure.

But seeming to understand that some would question the *possibility* of their gaining so great a prize, the holy Spirit, through the Apostle, gives to this called and chosen class a word of special encouragement, saying, “For if ye do these things ye shall never fall.” There may be more or less stumbling on the part of the elect, not through weakness of the spirit, the heart, the new mind, but “through manifold temptations” of the flesh, the earthen vessel, in which temporarily resides the new creature, begotten of the spirit, the elect.

The Apostle proceeds to give further assurances, saying, “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” The *elect* will not be received of the Lord with chidings and upbraidings for the imperfections of the flesh, which were unwillingly theirs, but on the contrary all the weaknesses of the flesh will be ignored, and the intents of the heart alone will be judged, and the heart-character formed will alone be tested and approved; and this will determine whether or not we shall stand the Lord’s approval and be granted the glorious things which he has promised to them that love him—“glory, honor and immortality” and a share in the Kingdom and its work of blessing.

THE ELECTION HOPE PURIFYING

“He that hath this [election] hope in him purifieth himself even as he [the Lord] is pure.” But how is it with those who have not this hope, and who are totally ignorant of this election,—even though they be Christians, in the sense of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Redeemer? Surely they are at a great disadvantage, lacking as they do the proper conception of the exceeding great and precious promises which are the channel of the power of God working in the elect both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

If we have seen that there is an elect class, it follows that there must be a non-elect class—those who are not making their calling and election sure, and it is proper in this connection that we see something respecting this class, and what provision God has made for them. This phase of the subject is treated elsewhere.*

*See pamphlet, *Hope for the Innumerable Non-elect*, sample free, this office.

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A GOOD MAN'S PRAYER ANSWERED

—ISAIAH 38:1-8.—JULY 9.—

Golden Text: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”—Psa. 46:1.

HEZEKIAH, known as the good king amongst King David's successors, took sick. A carbuncle or other malignant ulcer threatened his life, and the prophet Isaiah was sent to him by the Lord with the message, “Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die.” There are some who are inclined to claim that all sickness is of the devil, that no good person could be sick, etc., but we find nothing in the Scriptures to this effect. We do indeed find that all sickness and all death are indirectly the results of Satan's work. It was his deception of our first parents in Eden that brought upon them the death penalty, with its adjuncts of sorrow and pain, all of which is continued in us their children. We are not to forget that some of the Lord's most earnest saints have been sick, and that thus it is written, “He whom thou lovest is sick,” and again, “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.”

Regarding the whole race as under the divine sentence of death, we realize that as a result of our sharing in this penalty some of us are debilitated in one particular and some in another. All are imperfect mentally, morally and physically, but these imperfections take different forms according to different circumstances, heredities, etc. We are, therefore, to consider sickness in general as operating along the lines of cause and effect rather than as direct inflictions either of God or of Satan. It is well, however, to keep in mind the fact that the Jews under their covenant were subjects of special divine protection to the extent that they lived in harmony with the Lord, just as the Spiritual Israelites of this Gospel age are under special divine protection and guidance, only that the promises and blessings to the natural Israelites were of the earthly, temporal kind, while the blessings and care promised to the Spiritual Israelites are in respect to their spiritual welfare, their heavenly interests, their spiritual health, etc.

“SET THINE HOUSE IN ORDER”

Assuming then that Hezekiah's sickness was neither of divine nor satanic inflictions (as in the case of Job), and assuming that it was the natural effect from some natural cause, we see Hezekiah sick unto death but not without hope of recovery up to the time he received the message from the Lord at the mouth of Isaiah, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die." By this evidently was meant, Make such preparations in respect to the interests of the kingdom, the disposition of your property, arrangements for your funeral and for your successor in the throne as would be proper. We may each stop here to draw a practical lesson in respect to our affairs. We are not kings, as Hezekiah was, but we have, nevertheless, stewardships great or small received

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from the Lord in respect to which we should be faithful. The message has come to every one of us that we shall die—every member of the body of Christ is consecrated to death—"Be ye faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." "Ye shall all die like men."

Realizing this, it is incumbent upon us as a part of our stewardship to order the affairs of our lives, our homes, our business or whatever we may have as a stewardship in such a manner as will redound to the Lord's praise and for the good of his cause. This is setting the house in order, straightening out all the affairs of life, so that those who take up the lines where we drop them will be able to do so properly, intelligently—so that whatever we have of the Lord's goods may be disposed of as we believe would be his will, so that our stewardship faithfully carried out through life may faithfully end in death. A great many of the Lord's dear people need counsel on this subject. Many die without having set their houses in order, without having arranged their affairs financially and otherwise as stewards of the Lord's goods.

HEZEKIAH'S FEAR OF DEATH

Nothing in Hezekiah's conduct indicated that he had any fear that in dying he would pass into an eternity of torment. He had not so learned respecting the divine plan—neither the Law nor the prophets had given such an intimation. But, on the other hand, he did not exultingly cry, "O, now I shall soon be with God and the holy angels and know ten thousand times as much as I now know." He did not rejoice in the thought of death. On the contrary, he was sad and dejected, fearful, and pleaded with the Lord that he might continue to live. In all this he conducted himself in much the same way as other people do whose minds are not warped and twisted and tangled with false theologies—with the thought that if they were dead they would be more alive than they ever were when they were alive, etc.

Hezekiah on his sick bed turned his face to the wall, as though he would seek the more private communion with the Lord, and prayed, "Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, that I have

walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which is good in thy sight." This is a brief summary or digest of his prayer, which was accompanied with sore weeping. It was not a boastful prayer, for he freely acknowledged his sins (v. 17.) He did claim, however, as all should be able to claim, that he walked before the Lord with a perfect heart, with a perfect will, with thoroughly good intentions; that there was no desire in his heart to go contrary to the divine will. The history of his times bears out all that King Hezekiah claimed for himself respecting his good reign as the Lord's representative in the throne. See 2 Kings 18:3-6; 2 Chron. 29:2; 31:20,21.

The Lord was merciful to Hezekiah, hearing and answering his prayer. Isaiah had not gotten out of the king's house on his homeward way until a message from the Lord came to him directing him to return to Hezekiah's sick chamber to tell him that the Lord had heard his prayer and seen his tears and had added to his life fifteen years, directing him through the prophet to the medicine, the poultice which would bring relief—a poultice of figs. There is a lesson here: not that we should never use remedial agencies in connection with our troubles and ailments, but that we should recognize as behind the remedial agents the will of the Lord. The fig poultice would not have brought relief in this case aside from the divine interposition of divine power, but on the other hand the divine power preferred to operate through the poultice of figs rather than without it. It is not for us to dictate to the Lord how our blessings should come, but to seek to learn from these and other illustrations he has given us what would probably be his will respecting us and our afflictions.

The question arises, Did God change his plan and arrangements because of Hezekiah's prayer, and does he do so whenever a prayer is answered? We reply that in certain matters it evidently is as easy for the Lord to arrange them one way as another without any interference with his general plans. To our understanding the Lord would have allowed Hezekiah to die if he had not prayed. In other words, the Lord merely informed the king of what would have been the natural consequence of his case, and informed him for the very purpose of giving him an opportunity to ask in faith for his recovery. Thus the Lord waited to be gracious to him.

ALL CASES NOT ALIKE

We are not in this wishing to imply that Hezekiah's conduct and prayers should be a sample and a lesson to all of the Lord's people under similar circumstances, that when ourselves or our dear ones are ill we should make specific request for the prolongation of their lives and recovery from their illness. There is a difference between our condition and our relationship to the Lord and that of Hezekiah. Although the king was a good man he lived before the Gospel call began. He was, therefore, not one of the spirit-begotten ones, for the holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus had not yet suffered and had not yet been glorified. (John 7:39; 1 Pet. 1:11.) Those who are the

Lord's consecrated people now, the "saints," should realize that they have entered into a new special relationship to the Lord, different from that of other men; that the Lord has agreed with them that their surrender of earthly life and all their earthly interests shall bring to them instead special spiritual favors, privileges, safe guardings, etc.

From this standpoint it would be unwise to ask the Lord for earthly privileges and advantages of any kind, since this might work to their disadvantage as New Creatures. Rather they are to remember the words of our Lord, that all mankind are seeking after the earthly things, but that the Father knoweth the things we have need of before we ask him, without our asking him. The preferable attitude of heart for the Lord's consecrated people therefore is—O, Lord, thou knowest far better than I what would be for my highest welfare, my highest spiritual interest. Thou hast promised that all things shall work together for good to me because I am thine, because I have been called according to thy purpose. I entreat of thee give what is best in all of life's affairs and withhold whatever seems unto thee best—"Thy will be done." For the Lord's consecrated people to undertake to move Jehovah's arm in respect to their affairs would seem to be the taking of the rudder out of his hands—would seem to be more or less of self-will, which we have pledged to the Lord shall be dead that his will may be done in us.

The Lord granted Hezekiah a sign that he would recover and that he would live fifteen years. Elsewhere

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we learn (2 Kings 20:8) that Hezekiah requested the sign. This brings up the general question of the propriety of asking the Lord for signs. We find that the Lord gave Gideon a sign in answer to prayer—a choice of signs; and similarly in this case the Lord gave Hezekiah a choice of two signs, either that the shadow on the dial should advance ten degrees or that it should recede ten degrees. Hezekiah chose the latter as being the more difficult to be accounted for and therefore the surer test. On the other hand the Lord spoke disrespectfully of the Jews of his day saying, "This faithless generation seeketh after a sign," etc. The thought would seem to be that a sign may be desired for one of two reasons. Disbelief may ask a sign, thoroughly doubting the possibility of one; on the other hand true belief may ask one for confirmation of faith. The latter seems to have been the case with Gideon and also with Hezekiah. We recommend that the Lord's people of the New Creation avoid putting the Lord to tests and signs, for we remember that the Lord has called us to a special high calling, the test for which is faith, and that this is one reason why throughout this Gospel age he gives few if any outward signs, desiring his people to walk by faith and not by sight.

THE DIAL OF AHAZ

Hezekiah's father, King Ahaz, had erected a stone dial, the latest design up to that time for measuring the hours of the day. It was formed of a succession of steps on two sides and a crest in the center, and was so oriented that the rising sun would so strike the top as to cast its shadow on the lowest step on the western side of the dial. As the sun rose higher and higher the shadow crept up and up, step by step, until at noonday there was no shadow, for the sun was directly overhead. In the afternoon, the sun having passed to the westward, the shadows would begin to lengthen out upon the eastward side of the monument or dial, covering gradually one side at a time until the last, each step representing approximately half an hour.

The turning back of the shadow ten degrees or ten steps on the dial would be a very noticeable matter, not only to the king, who looked for it, but to his entire household and to the people of Israel in general, who would be informed of the event, the king's business being very generally public property in such matters. It was a miracle probably very similar to that wrought in Joshua's day, when the sunlight was made to linger in the valley of Ajalon. We have no thought that God either stopped the earth on its axis or that he moved the sun backward in its course. In either of these cases the miracles as we may call them could be much easier performed, and we think that undoubtedly the Lord would take the easier way in any such matter. Prof. Garbett declares that he had a practical illustration of this miracle, and describes the modus operandi to the astronomer Richard A. Proctor, as follows:—

THE MIRACLE'S POSSIBLE PROCESS

“The shiftings of the shadows on the dial that Isaiah predicted to sick Hezekiah are liable to occur at any time when these two circumstances concur: (1) that the upper atmosphere is in that condition which causes two bright parhelia or mock suns to appear on opposite sides of the sun; and (2) that the air contains drifting clouds, massive enough to hide often two of the three. When the real sun and the eastern mock sun are hidden, there is only the western to cast shadows, which then coincides with that the sun will cast an hour and a half later; but if the clouds shift so as to hide the west parhelion, and disclose the eastern, the shadows instantly become such as the sun casts an hour and a half earlier. The parhelia being always caused by rays refracted through two faces of equilateral triangular prisms or fibers of ice, their angular distance from the sun is always the minimum deviation that such a prism of ice produces on the brightest or yellow rays, which is very nearly a fourth of a right angle; so that if Hezekiah's dialers divided the quadrant into forty, than which no number is more likely, considering how constantly it recurs in the Hebrew laws and history (oftener, indeed, than any number above ten), the advance or recession of the shadow would have to be ten of these parts. On March 28, 1848, these effects occurred, had any one been looking, on every dial in the Isle of Portsea, and very probably of much of Hampshire besides. The parhelia were present and bright enough at about 11 a.m. and still better at 1 p.m.”

The fact that the method of God's operations might be learned by us would not disprove them. For instance, some day we shall know just what process turned the water into wine at Cana of Galilee, but our knowledge of the process thus used by our Lord will not in any measure detract from the miracle which was certainly beyond human power—just as in the miracle now under consideration, all the laws of nature are subject to the God of all creation, and this is sufficient for the eye and ear and heart of faith.

HEZEKIAH'S PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE

On his recovery from his illness Hezekiah wrote a poem of thanksgiving, praising the Lord for his deliverance from the jaw of death—from the grave. In it he describes his feelings as he thought of death and his rejoicing at his recovery. He said, "In the cutting off of my days I shall go into the gates of the grave [sheol, hades, the tomb]. I am deprived of the residue of my years. ... Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: my eyes fail with looking upward: O, Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. What shall I say? He hath spoken unto me and himself hath done it." [I freely acknowledge that it was not the lump of figs, but the Lord who had produced the recovery.] Then, speaking of the effect this should have upon him for the remaining years, he added, "I shall go softly all my years because of the bitterness of my soul. ... Behold it was for my peace that I had great bitterness, but thou hast in love for my soul delivered it from the body of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. For the grave [sheol, hades] cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day."—Verses 9-19.

Hezekiah's proper desires were to live and serve and praise the Lord. He well knew that these things would be impossible in death, that the only hope in death is in the resurrection. The case of the Lord's people even during this Gospel age, even since redeemed with the precious blood, has been very similar. They have properly no desire to be unclothed but rather to be clothed upon with the heavenly conditions. But now in the close of the age matters are different from what they ever were before. Living as we are in the presence of the Son of man, we realize that although all must die,

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yet the overcomers will not sleep, but will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—in the moment of dying—changed to the glorious spirit condition which the Lord has promised to them that love him. From our standpoint, then, not only has death lost its terrors, because Christ has redeemed us from the power of the tomb and will by and by bring forth all from it that are in it, that they may have an opportunity for coming into harmony with him and attainment to eternal life, but to us death has lost its dread in another sense, namely, that we shall not need to

sleep—ours is the blessed time of the change. Let us wait for our change and seek by the Lord's grace to be so prepared for it in heart and character development that we shall welcome it with joy.

“Unanswered yet!—the prayers your lips have pleaded
 In agony of heart these many years;—
 Does faith begin to fail? Is hope departing?
 And think you all in vain those falling tears?
 Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer:
 He'll answer yet your right desire—sometime, somewhere.”

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THE WORLD'S REDEEMER PICTURED

—ISAIAH 52:13-53:12.—JULY 16.—

Golden Text:—“The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.”

THIS little section of Isaiah's great prophecy is a very striking one. The original prophecy, as is well known, was without division into chapters and verses.

The preceding context points us clearly and distinctly to the second advent of our Lord and his gathering of his people to himself. It describes the present time, therefore, the harvest of this Gospel age, telling how the Lord's people would now know his name—understand and appreciate his true character, announce the presence of the King and the beginning of his reign. (Vs. 6-8.) It also tells of the beginning of favor upon natural Israel, and, looking into the future, points to the Lord's glorification through that people. (Vs. 9-10.) It also shows the separating work of this harvest time, the gathering of the good fish into the vessels, the gathering of the wheat into the barn.

Then, pointing to the Millennial reign of Christ, the first three verses of our lesson (13-15) picture the high exaltation and honor of Jehovah's servant Son, our Lord Jesus, saying, “He shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and honored and shall be very high.” The whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, which will then shine forth through the blessed and

wise government of Immanuel, as has been declared, "The Desire of all Nations shall come:" they shall see that the way of righteousness is the desirable way, the blessed way, the way of true wisdom and happiness,

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and all who will refuse to come into this attitude shall be cut off from amongst the people in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

Next a contrast is instituted between how our Lord was humiliated and how by and by he shall be exalted. The prophet, so to speak, takes his seat at the cross, and beholds the Lord sadly distorted in his crucifixion, torn in an inhuman manner, his features drawn with pain. The picture of this, as given in Cheyne's translation, is written in poetic form, as was the original. It reads as follows:—

"Deeply marred was his appearance, out of all human likeness,
And his form out of all semblance to sons of men;
But as deep will be the obeisance of many.
Before him kings shall be awestruck in silence."

The thought evidently is that his glory and honor, influence and power, will be proportionate to the sufferings and ignominy which he experienced. And this is the thought everywhere held out in the Scriptures, not only as respects our Redeemer but also as respects his Church. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." Present trials and sufferings work out for us a "far more and exceeding weight of glory." So in speaking of our Lord the Apostle declares that "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth."—Phil. 2:8.

We cannot claim that it is a divine law that glory and honor must be preceded by sufferings and humiliations. Our heavenly Father and the holy angels, highly honored, have never been humiliated. Nevertheless we are assured that so far as God's dealings with the Church of this present Gospel age are concerned, they are along these lines. The suffering is not compulsory but granted us as a privilege, and the exaltation is held out as a reward, marking the degree of divine approval. With this thought before us how it helps us to appreciate the sentiments of the Apostle, "Gladly, therefore, will I glory in tribulation." We glory not in the tribulations themselves, for sometimes they seem to the flesh to be grievous; but our hearts can glory in tribulations, since we know that under the divine arrangement governing our call as the Church of Christ these tribulations are working in us those elements of character pleasing and acceptable in the Father's sight, which eventually he will reward with a share in the exaltation of our Redeemer, our

Bridegroom.

So grand, so glorious will be the demonstration of divine power and blessing in the Messiah that no word of dissent will be heard—unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. This will be true not only of the common people, the world in general, but true also of the greatest, the princes, the kings of earth, intellectual kings, financial kings, political kings. All eyes shall be opened, all ears shall be unstopped, to the knowledge of divine goodness and mercy, justice and truth, as it will then be revealed in the Messiah.

“WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR TEACHING?”

In the fifty-third chapter the Prophet looks backward from our day and the coming glory, and intimates that until the glory of the Lord shall be revealed his cause will make comparatively little headway in the world. The true teaching respecting him and his mission will not be generally received—various false teachings, false gospels will have the preference. The inquiry, “Who hath believed our report?” our teaching, our presentations, implies the answer, Few. And so it has been. There were few who had the hearing ears and understanding hearts at the time of our Lord’s first

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advent, and only a few all down throughout the Gospel age have really and truly appreciated the message.

True, there are large numbers to-day who are nominally Christians, who with their lips draw nigh to the Lord occasionally one day in the seven for an hour, but who are at heart far from him. The vast majority, even in the pulpits of Christendom, seem not to have given heed to the report, the doctrines, the teaching of the Lord’s Word in respect to Messiah, his sufferings of this present time and his glories to follow, but rather to have hearkened to false doctrines misrepresenting the divine plan of the ages, substituting therefor many “doctrines of devils,” in which a little truth is mixed with much error, to the discomfiture and spiritual sickness and weakness of many of the Lord’s truly begotten ones, and to the total confusion of the world, “Christendom.”

“To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?” cried the prophet. Alas, it is so that few, very few, see in our Lord Jesus the powerful arm, the omnipotence of Jehovah, stretched down for the aid of our fallen race. Few realize that the work finished at Calvary is the foundation, the basis, upon which the great Jehovah will ultimately establish the Millennial Kingdom for the blessing and uplifting of all the families of the earth. The majority see Jesus as merely the finger of the Lord, doing a comparatively small work for a comparatively small class. As our eyes open we behold to our joy that Messiah, Head and body, will yet constitute the arm of Jehovah, that all-powerful force

which shall overthrow evil and establish righteousness and bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. 3:29.

GOD’S WAYS NOT MAN’S WAYS

The prophet proceeds to point out why the report, the teaching, of God’s Word and the power of his omnipotent arm for man’s salvation have not been discerned by mankind. It is largely because the Lord’s way of accomplishing matters is the very reverse of what mankind would have naturally expected. With our mental tendencies, our natural expectations would have been that the Son of the Highest at his first advent would have been manifested in glory and not in humiliation—that the heavenly Father would have sent him in glory and not in humiliation. Even in his taking of the human form and nature we would have expected it to be under such conditions and with such environments as would have shown forth strikingly and forcefully amongst the members of the human race.

It was a disappointment, especially to the Jews, who were expecting a glorious and powerful king, that our Lord came as the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. To them he appeared too tender a plant to ever prosper. They acknowledged him to be of the Davidic line, but esteemed him to be from one of the roots of David which had lost its virility, its life. They thought him a root out of dry ground, from which they could never hope for a sprout of power and glory and dignity and honor such as they had anticipated Messiah would have. In him they saw not the form of the soldier, the general, which to their conception was the grand, the comely form that Messiah would have, boasting of his power, his strength, his divine support, etc.

No wonder the poor Jews were disappointed, no wonder they considered him undesirable as material for a king, no wonder that they had no hope that he would ever be the great Messiah, the great deliverer. We sympathize with them deeply in their disappointments and in their failure to recognize him as Immanuel. He was despised and rejected of men, even of the men of his own nation, who for sixteen centuries had hoped and waited for his coming. They were ashamed of him, hid their faces from him. He was despised of the Romans and counted unworthy of particular notice, whether he claimed to be king of the Jews or what not, and the Jews esteemed him not—except the few who, because they were Israelites indeed, were guided to an appreciation of him with a wisdom from on high.

What meant all this? Why should the King of glory, the Sent of God, the heir of all the promises, be thus the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Ah! says the prophet, I perceive surely that it was our griefs that he bore, our sorrows that he carried, not his own. We thought that he was

stricken of God, that he was afflicted by the Almighty, and that this was an evidence that he was not in divine favor. We misunderstood the entire matter. Now we see that his wounds were for our transgressions, that his bruises were for our iniquities, that our peace with God was secured by the stripes, the chastisements, the penalties of the divine law inflicted upon him. We perceive that by his stripes we are healed,—that the punishment or stripes due to us were laid upon him, that the death sentence that was against us he bore, dying the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

“BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED”

Yes, yes, continues the prophet, we all went astray like sheep, following one another into wrong paths. We, even of the seed of Abraham, brought nigh to God’s favor through the Law Covenant under Moses, have failed to retain our position as proper sheep of his fold, and the penalty of divine justice has been borne by the Shepherd for his sheep, Jehovah hath laid on him—charged up to him, accepted of him—the iniquity of us all. How gracious is this message! Those who received it first from Isaiah, having the guidance and enlightenment of the holy Spirit, could not appreciate his words to the full, but, nevertheless, must have to some extent appreciated them—must have drawn some blessing and hope from them. But now, we of this Gospel age, living since the redemption price was paid, and since it was accepted by the Father on our behalf when our Master ascended on high, and since the Pentecostal blessing evidencing our forgiveness has reached every member of the consecrated class to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, to enable us to see the deep things of God and his gracious promises, we may now rejoice in these things so hard for the Jew to understand, and equally impossible for the natural man of the Gentiles to comprehend. Truly our Lord’s words are refreshing and explanatory—“To you it is given to know of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God;” to all others these things are “spoken in parables and dark sayings.”—Luke 8:10; Mat. 13:10-15,35.

“HE OPENED NOT HIS MOUTH”

He was oppressed, as a lamb he was led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; yet he opened not his mouth. The fulfilment of this we see in the case of our Lord. Had he chosen to open his mouth, to argue his case, to defend himself, we may well suppose that the Scribes and Pharisees, high

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priests and doctors of the Law, Pilate and his soldiers and the Jewish rabble, would have succumbed to the eloquence of him who spoke as never man spoke. Thus he might merely have defended himself with his tongue, and righteously, too, without ever moving a finger in his own

defence or exercising any of the divine powers deposited in him, or calling for any of the legions of angels who would have responded to his prayer. He did indeed reply to a question of the High Priest and also to a question by Pilate, but he was dumb so far as making any plea or endeavoring in any manner to deliver himself from the death which he perceived was upon him and which he knew was permitted of the Father. As he himself expressed it—"The cup which the Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"

We must not lose sight of the fact that our dear Redeemer is also our pattern and that we are to walk in his steps. The lesson to us, then, is full submission to divine providence in respect to all of our affairs—those which we see clearly and understand and those also which are obscure to us, some of which at times may seem unnecessary. Our faith must triumph; we must learn that our Father is too wise to err, and that he loves us too much to cause a needless tear, a needless pang. But if he permitted severe afflictions to come upon his Son, his well beloved and only one, that he might be tested and proven in respect to his loyalty to the last degree, shall we wonder that in calling us to be associates of that Son in glory, he should require of us also that we should learn obedience by the things we suffer? Gladly then, says the Apostle, will we suffer; gladly will we take this as an evidence that we are in the hands of the Lord and that he is shaping and fashioning us according to the glorious pattern, that we may ultimately be participants also of the heavenly glories and joys and immortality promised to his faithful.

"By oppression and judgment he was taken away," cut off from life—oppression or injustice so far as those who condemned him were concerned, by divine justice and judgment so far as God was concerned, because he had consecrated himself unto death as man's Redeemer, and the Father had accepted him as such.

"WITH THE WICKED AND THE RICH"

"And who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off out of the land of the living." Who could suppose that he would have offspring, children—that he would be ultimately the Everlasting Father to the world of mankind? Who could have seen any prospect, any hope, for the race through his death? Who could have foreseen that as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive? To have discerned these things would have been impossible, and the poor Jews and the world in general are not to be blamed for not discerning them. Rather those who have come into relationship to the Lord through faith and through obedience unto consecration, and who have been begotten of the Spirit to newness of nature, and through the Spirit's enlightenment are able to comprehend these wonderful things of the divine plan—these highly favored of God may rejoice in their blessings without condemning those who do not enjoy to the full the same blessings and opportunities in this present time. Yes, the entire secret of the matter lies in our perception that

Jesus was the Redeemer, the one who bought the world with his own precious blood, the one who was stricken by the Father, not for his own sins but for our transgressions—for the transgressions of the people, “for the sins of the whole world.”

Although he had done no violence he was numbered with the transgressors, with the wicked, in his death, being crucified between two thieves, although there was no deceit in his mouth and he had gained no riches by deceiving or overreaching his neighbor; yet he was buried in the tomb of the rich Joseph of Arimathea. Thus does the prophet mark certain incidents connected with our Lord’s death, that our Redeemer’s identity might be the more clearly established.

“IT PLEASSED JEHOVAH”

All these things, apparently so unjust and so unreasonable and so contrary to anything mankind could have expected, Jehovah was pleased to permit. To have exacted such sufferings from Jesus as our penalty would have been an injustice, and this would have been an impossibility to God; but it did please him to allow his only-begotten one to demonstrate his loyalty and faith even unto death, even the death of the cross. It pleased him that the Son should thus be temporarily injured and put to grief because he foresaw the glorious results both to Jesus and to mankind. To his Son he would give more than compensating honor and glory and dignity and power, yea, eternal life, when to his hands would be committed all the remaining features of the divine plan.

Well did the Father know that his Son’s faith and obedience would be abundantly rewarded. Well did he know that the soul of Jesus, his being, would constitute the sin offering for Adam and his race, and well he knew that ultimately the Son should see a reward from this travail of his soul which would satisfy him, which would more than compensate every trial, every tear, every pain. And is it not wonderful that in God’s providence the called ones of this Gospel age may apply these same consolations and assurances each to his own heart, and know that all things are working together for good to them that love God—to the called ones according to his purpose? Is it not wonderful that we also have the assurance that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, that if we experience travail of soul in following in the footsteps of our Redeemer we shall have more than compensating satisfaction, and that the Word of the Lord so guarantees it? To all who accept the Lord’s promises in faith, the matter becomes a certainty—“Faith can firmly trust him, come what may.”

Although when he was cut off from the land of the living none could have declared his generation, his seed, his posterity, yet he shall see his seed—the redeemed and restored of mankind, who at the close of the Millennial age shall be privileged to inherit all the earthly things lost by father Adam, redeemed by Jesus, restored by the Second Adam.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

The declaration that it was by his knowledge that our Lord Jesus, as the righteous servant of Jehovah, justified many and bore their iniquities, is an important item in this lesson. We see that it was from lack of knowledge of God that the first Adam in his perfection was weak. Not knowing the power of God, not realizing his gracious and merciful character, father Adam considered that all hope of comfort, joy and pleasure in life had gone from him when mother Eve transgressed the divine regulation respecting the forbidden fruit and

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came under the divine sentence of death. Being unacquainted with the divine character he was without hope respecting her recovery and his own future happiness, and therefore deliberately shared the death penalty with his wife—suicided, so to speak. On the contrary our Lord Jesus, knowing the Father, remembering the glory he had with him before the world was, trusting the Father implicitly, was able to be obedient to the Father's requirements, even unto death, even the death of the cross.

Thus did knowledge serve him in good stead and enable him to pass through the most trying experiences victoriously. It was his knowledge, then, in conjunction with his mental and moral and physical perfection, that enabled our Lord Jesus to fully meet all the requirements of his consecration and thus enabled him to justify many, to redeem Adam and his race—enabled him to bear their iniquities cheerfully, joyfully, delighting to do the Father's will, and for the joy that was set before him enduring the cross, despising the shame.

No wonder, then, that the Scriptures everywhere set forth the thought that knowledge is important to the followers of Jesus; no wonder that they urge upon us that we grow in grace and in knowledge, assuring us that to know God is eternal life. To attain to that relationship to God which will permit us to fully know him and appreciate his just and reasonable and loving commands would signify that we were in the condition which he would be pleased to bless everlastingly, and signify also that, possessing this knowledge, we should be able to fulfil all the reasonable requirements imposed upon us. Let none of us, then, despise knowledge.

Nevertheless, while heartily appreciating it, let us not forget that it is not merely knowledge about his plan, nor knowledge of the various so-called earthly sciences, but the knowledge or acquaintanceship of God himself. Thus the Apostle also declares of our Lord Jesus, "that we may know him," be acquainted with him, be intimate with him. Whoever has this intimate relationship with the Father and the Son has therein the power of God, which will work in him to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure, and ultimately bring him to a glorious inheritance under the divine

arrangement. But, as the Apostle points out, to have knowledge of earthly things or of the divine plan without having the heart obedience and the heart acquaintanceship with the Lord, might leave us still poor and wretched and miserable, sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

THE “GREAT” AND THE “STRONG”

Therefore, because of his faithfulness as God’s righteous servant, because guided by his knowledge in his obedience to the Father, because faithful in bearing

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the iniquities of the many, therefore “God will divide him a portion with the great.” How great a portion is not here stated. Other Scriptures inform us that the Father has given him a portion with himself—he overcame and sat down with the Father in his throne. He has indeed been granted a portion with the great—the great Jehovah. In turn he shall divide the spoil with the strong, the spoil of his great conquest over sin and death at the cost of his own life, the spoil of victory, the reward of his own high exaltation far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—the reward of his high relationship with the Father, the reward of his Millennial Kingdom and its opportunities and privileges of blessing the whole groaning creation, the reward of the Father’s smile and favor eternally.

This “spoil,” which all came to the dear Redeemer as the one who kept the Law and redeemed the world with his own precious blood, this spoil he proposes to share with the faithful of his followers, the overcomers, here called “the strong.” O, what a thought! In all our weaknesses and imperfections we are by the Lord’s grace enabled to come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

With the Apostle we can say, “When I am weak, then am I strong;” when I realize my own imperfections and shortcomings then, by faith realizing the strength and perfection of my dear Redeemer and his provision for all who are his, I can be strong in faith and trust and love, and realize that the exceeding great and precious promises of God’s Word are yea and amen to me. In the present life, then, by faith we have a portion with the Lord, and may reckon ourselves as having passed from death unto life, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. But the attainment of all these things, their fulness and completeness, lies beyond the grave, beyond the resurrection, when all the faithful shall be with him and, like him, share his glory, for “he will divide the spoil with the strong.”

THE CAUSE OF THE MATTER

Our lesson closes with a reiteration of the general facts stated. All of this greatness given to our Lord and shared with his faithful followers is because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. How emphatically the Scriptures point out to us that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, that without the ransom price being paid there could have been no release of Adam and his race from the sentence of death, no hope of any of them attaining life everlasting. As we appreciate this great central thought of the divine plan, let us reverence our dear Master the more as the author of our faith, who, by and by, will be the finisher of it, and let us seek more and more to be faithful to him and to walk in his steps and to lay down our lives for the brethren.

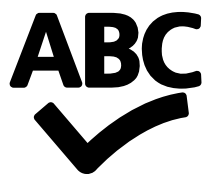
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THE CHATTANOOGA CONVENTION

Although we were unfortunate in the selection of the date of this Convention, June being a very busy time for the Southern farmer, nevertheless we had a delightful season of fellowship. The gathering numbered about 150 from every quarter of the South land, with a fair representation from more northerly States. The Sunday afternoon session was for the public and had an attendance of between 500 and 600. We have reason to hope that some true Israelites profited by the discourse on The Oath-bound Covenant, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The dear friends of the Chattanooga Church managed the arrangements so well that we heard not a single murmur. Everybody looked happy with a holy joy that lit all faces. The testimonies, too, corroborated this. Nearly all told of a share of the opposition promised to all who seek to closely follow the Savior, and of joys from the Truth which made oppositions seem light afflictions in view of the hopes of future glory with our Lord. Two Baptist ministers were in attendance at nearly all of the sessions, and one of these at the close of the Love Feast, told the writer of his proposed methods for extending the knowledge of the "good tidings of great joy for all people" to many whom he has been serving hitherto as a Baptist. Eleven brethren and ten sisters symbolized their consecration by water immersion. It is our hope that all present were richly repaid for their expenditure of time and money and that the blessing of the Lord poured upon their hearts will extend to their friends and brethren at their various homes.

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Jeżeli zauważysz błąd w pisowni, powiadom nas poprzez zaznaczenie tego fragmentu tekstu i przyciśnięcie *Ctrl+Enter*.