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What is the Soul?

"He spared not their souls from death."—Psalm 78:50.

SOME one will possibly say, Ah! No one believes in the immortality of the body. Everybody knows that the body dies, that it needs resupply continually and that hence it cannot be immortal. But the Scriptures speak of souls. May it not be that the soul is indestructible?—that God having made a soul cannot destroy it?

Reason tells us that, unless there is absolute proof to the contrary, the life of every creature is subject to the will of the Creator. Now notice that the Scriptures nowhere speak of the immortality of the soul, as some people seem to suppose—neither in the translations nor in the original text. Take a Concordance and try to find the expression "immortal soul," and thus you can quickly convince yourself that no such expression is found in the Scriptures. On the contrary, the Scriptures declare that "God is able to destroy both soul and body;" and again, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." As we have already seen, that which can die, which can be destroyed, is not immortal, is not proof against death, destruction. Hence the Scriptures cited prove that neither souls nor bodies are immortal.

What, then, is the soul?

The general idea of the soul is that it is an indefinable something in us, but what it is or where it is located few attempt to explain. This unknown something is claimed to be the real, intelligent being, while the body is merely its house or tool. A Methodist bishop once defined a soul, thus: "It is without interior or exterior, without body, shape, or parts, and you could put a million of them into a nutshell;"—a very good definition of nothing, we should say!

God Able to Destroy Both Soul and Body.

The body is not the soul, as some affirm; this is proved by our Lord's statement that "God is able to destroy both soul and body." And now, in view of the foregoing, if our minds be freed from prejudice, we ought to be able to learn something further on this subject by examining the inspired record of man's creation. Turning to Genesis 2:7, we read:—

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed [Heb. blew] into his nostrils the breath [Heb. wind] of life [Heb. lives plural—i. e., such as was common to all living animals]; and man became a living soul" [i. e., a sentient being].

From this account it appears that the body was formed first, but it was not a man, soul or being, until animated. It had eyes, but saw nothing; ears, but heard nothing; a mouth, but spoke nothing; a tongue, but no taste; nostrils, but no sense of smell; a heart, but it pulsed not; blood, but it was cold, lifeless; lungs, but they moved not. It was not a man, but a corpse, an inanimate body.

The second step in the process of man's creation was to give vitality to the properly "formed" and in every way prepared body; and this is described by the words "blew into his nostrils the breath of life." When a healthy person has been drowned, and animation is wholly suspended, resuscitation has, it is said, been effected by working the arms and thus the lungs as a bellows, and so gradually establishing the breath in the nostrils. In Adam's case it of course required no labored effort on the part of the Creator to cause the perfect organism which he had made to breathe the life-giving oxygen of the atmosphere.

As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, which organ in turn propelled them to every part of the body, awakening all the prepared, but hitherto dormant, nerves to sensation and energy. In an instant the energy reached the brain, and thought, perception, reasoning, looking, touching, smelling,

feeling and tasting commenced. That which was a lifeless human organism had become a man, a sentient being; the "living soul" condition mentioned in the text had been reached. In other words, the term "living soul" means neither more nor less than the term "sentient being"; i. e., a being capable of sensation, perception, thought.

Moreover, even though Adam was perfect in his organism, it was necessary for him to sustain life, soul or sentient being, by partaking of the fruits of the trees of life. And when he sinned, God drove him from the garden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree [plural trees or grove] of life, and eat, and live forever" [i. e., by eating continuously]. (Gen. 3:22.) How the fogs and mysteries scatter before the light of truth which shines from God's Word!

Lower Animals Also are Souls.

Thus, also, we see why it is that the Scriptures speak of "souls" in connection with the lower animals. They, as well as man, are sentient beings or creatures of intelligence, only of lower orders. They, as well as man, can see, hear, feel, taste and smell; and each can reason up to the standard of his own organism, though none can reason as abstrusely nor on as high a plane as man. This difference is not because man has a different kind of life from that possessed by the lower animals; for all have similar vital forces, from the same fountain or source of life, the same Creator; all sustain life in the same manner, by the digestion of similar foods, producing blood, and muscles, and bones, etc., each according to his kind or nature; and each propagates his species similarly, bestowing the life, originally from God, upon his posterity. They differ in shape and in mental capacity.

Nor can it be said that while man is a soul (or intelligent being) beasts are without this soul-quality or intelligence, thought, feeling. On the contrary, both man and beast have soul-quality or intelligent, conscious being. Not only is this the statement of Scripture, but it is readily discernible as a fact, as soon as the real meaning of the word soul is comprehended, as shown foregoing. To illustrate: Suppose the creation of a perfect dog; and suppose that creation had been particularly described, as was Adam's, what difference of detail could be imagined? The body of a dog created would not be a dog until the breath of life would be caused to energize that body;—then it would be a living creature with sensibilities and powers all its own—a living soul of the lower order, called dog, as Adam, when he received life, became a living creature with sensibilities and powers all his own—a living soul of the highest order of flesh beings, called man.

Man's Finer Organism.

If the great difference between man and beast is not in the life which animates both, and not from lack of soul-power which both possess, can it be that the difference is in their bodies? Yes; assuredly, the natural difference is physical, in addition to which is the fact that God has made provision for man's future, as expressed in his promises, while no such provision for a future life is made for beasts—nor are they organically capable of appreciating metaphysics. Other things being equal, the size and weight of the brain indicates capacity and intelligence. In this respect man has been more highly endowed than the brute, by the Creator. The brute has less brains than man, and what it has belongs almost exclusively to the selfish propensities. Its highest conception of right and wrong is the will of its master, man; it cannot appreciate the sublime in morals or in nature; the Creator did not give it a brain-capacity for such things.

But although, because of his fall into sin and death, man's condition is far from what it was in its original perfection when pronounced "very good" by the highest Judge;—so that some,

by the cultivation of the lower organs of thought and a failure to use the higher, intellectual faculties, have dwarfed the organs of the brain representing these higher faculties, yet the organs are still there, and are capable of development, which is not the case with the most nearly perfect specimens of the brute creation. So then it is in that the Creator has endowed man with a higher and finer organism, that he has made him to differ from the brute. They have similar flesh and bones, breathe the same air, drink the same water, and eat similar food, and all are souls or creatures possessing intelligence; but man, in his better body, possesses capacity for higher intelligence and is treated by the Creator as on an entirely different plane. It is in proportion as sin degrades man from his original likeness of his Creator that he is said to be "brutish"—more nearly resembling the brutes, destitute of the higher and finer sensibilities.

To this the Scripture testimony agrees. We read (Gen. 1:30), "To you it shall be for meat, and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life [Heb. 'nepshesh chayyah'—a living soul]."—Again (Gen. 1:20), "Let the waters bring forth the moving creature that hath life [Heb.—a living soul]."—See marginal readings.

The Scripture Teaching on This.

The same lesson,—that the life principle is no different in mankind from what it is in all other creatures whose breath is taken through the nostrils, as distinguishing them from fish,—is taught in the account of the destruction wrought by the Deluge. (Gen. 6:17; 7:15, 22.) This is in full accord with King Solomon's statement that man and beast have all "one breath" [Heb. ruach, spirit of life]—one kind of life; and that "as the one dieth, so dieth the other." (Eccl. 3:19.) When he asks (Eccl. 3:21), "Who knoweth the spirit of man that [it] goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that [it] goeth downward to the earth?" he is controverting the heathen theory, which even at that time had begun to speculate that man had some inherent quality which would prevent his death, even when he seemed to die. The wise man challenges any proof, any knowledge, to such effect. This challenge to others to produce proofs, or admit that they have no such knowledge, follows his statement of the truth on the subject in verses 19 and 20.

The distinction between man and beast is not in the kind of breath or life, but in that man has a higher organism than other animals; possessing moral and intellectual powers and qualities in the image or likeness of those possessed by the Creator, who has a still higher organism, of spirit, not of flesh. And, as already shown, man's hope for a future life lies not in his inherent powers, but in his Creator's gracious provision which centered in the redemption of every soul of man from death, by the great Redeemer, and the consequent provision that whosoever will may have everlasting life by resurrection, subject to the terms of the New Covenant.

Our Redeemer "poured out his soul [being] unto death," "he made his soul [being] an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10, 12); and it was the soul of Adam (and his posterity) that he thus bought with his precious blood—by making his soul (being) an offering for sin. Consequently it is souls that were redeemed, and that are to be awakened, resurrected.

Many suppose that the bodies buried are to be restored atom for atom, but, on the contrary, the Apostle declares, "Thou sowest [in death] not that body which shall be." In the resurrection God will give to each person (to each soul or sentient being) such a body as his infinite wisdom has been pleased to provide; to the Church, the "Bride" selected in this age, spirit bodies; to the restitution class, human bodies, but not the same ones lost in death.—1 Cor. 15:37, 38.

As in Adam's creation, the bringing together of an organism and the breath of life produced a sentient being or soul, so the dissolution of these, from

any cause, puts an end to sentient being,—stopping thoughts and feelings of every kind. The soul (i. e., sentient being) ceases; the body returns to dust as it was; while the spirit or breath of life returns to God, who imparted it to Adam, and to his race through him. (Eccl. 12:7.) It returns to God in the sense that it is no longer amenable to human control, as in pro-creation, and can never be recovered except by divine power. Recognizing this fact, the Lord's instructed ones commit their hope of future life by resurrection to God and to Christ, his now exalted representative. (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59.) So, then, had God made no provision for man's future life by a ransom and a promised resurrection, death would have been the end of all hope for humanity.—1 Cor. 15:14-18.

God's Provision for Our Living Again.

But God has thus made provision for our living again; and ever since he made known his gracious plan, those who speak and write intelligently upon the subject (for instance the inspired Scripture writers), as if by common consent, speak of the unconscious interim between death and the resurrection morning, in which sentient being is suspended, as a "sleep." Indeed, the illustration is an excellent one; for the dead will be totally unconscious of the lapse of time, and the moment of awakening will seem to them like the next moment after the moment of their dissolution. For instance, we read that speaking of Lazarus' death our Lord said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, I go that I may awake him out of sleep." Afterward, because the disciples were slow to comprehend, he said, "Lazarus is dead." (John 11:11.) Were the theory of consciousness in death correct, is it not remarkable that Lazarus gave no account of his experience during those four days? None will claim that he was in a "hell" of torment, for our Lord calls him his "friend"; and if he had been in heavenly bliss our Lord would not have called him from it, for that would have been an unfriendly act. But as our Lord expressed it, Lazarus slept, and he awakened him to life, to consciousness, to his sentient being, or soul returned or revived; and all this was evidently a favor greatly appreciated by Lazarus and his friends.

The thought pervades the Scriptures that we are now in the night of dying and sleeping as compared with the morning of awakening and resurrection. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Psa. 30:5.

The apostles also frequently used this appropriate, hopeful and peaceful figure of speech. For instance, Luke says of Stephen, the first martyr, "he fell asleep"; and in recording Paul's speech at Antioch he used the same expression, "David fell on sleep." (Acts 7:60; 13:36.) Peter uses the same expression, saying, "The fathers fell asleep." (2 Pet. 3:4.) And Paul used it many times, as the following quotations show:—

"The greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep."—1 Cor. 15:6.

"If there be no resurrection, then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—1 Cor. 15:13-18.

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"Christ is risen from the dead and
become the first-fruits of them that
slept."—1 Cor. 15:20.

"Behold, I show you a mystery, we
shall not all sleep."—1 Cor. 15:51.

"I would not have you to be igno-
rant, brethren, concerning them that
are asleep."—1 Thess. 4:13.

"Them that sleep in Jesus, will God
bring [from the dead] with [by] him."
—1 Thess. 4:14.

When the Kingdom, the resurrection
time, comes, "we who are alive and re-
main unto the presence of the Lord
shall not precede them that are asleep."
—1 Thess. 4:15.

They "fell asleep" in peace, to await
the Lord's Day—the Day of Christ, the
Millennial Day—fully persuaded that
he [Christ] is able to keep that which
they committed unto him against that
day. (2 Tim. 1:12.) This same thought
runs through the Old Testament as
well—from the time that God first
preached to Abraham the Gospel of a
resurrection; the expression, "He slept
with his fathers," is very common in
the Old Testament. But Job puts the
matter in very forcible language, say-
ing, "Oh that thou wouldst hide me in
the grave, that thou wouldst keep me
secret until thy wrath be [over] past!"
The present dying time is the time of
God's wrath—the curse of death being
upon all, because of the original trans-
gression. However, we are promised
that in due time the curse will be lift-
ed and a blessing will come through
the Redeemer to all the families of the
earth; and so Job continues, "All the
days of my appointed time will I wait,
until my change come: [then] thou
shalt call [John 5:25] and I will answer
thee; thou shalt have a desire unto
the work of thine hands." (Job 14:14,
15.) And we of the New Testament
times read our Lord's response, "All
that are in the graves shall hear the
voice of the Son of man" [calling them
to awake and come to a full knowledge
of God and to a full opportunity of
everlasting life].—John 5:25, 29.

An Illustration—A Candle.

Let us illustrate the human and animal
body, soul and spirit by something
less complex and better understood
generally; for instance,—an unlighted
candle would correspond to an inani-
mate human body or corpse, the light-
ing of the candle would correspond to
the spark of life originally imparted by
the Creator; the flame or light cor-
responds to sentient being or intelli-
gence or soul quality; the oxygenized
atmosphere which unites with the car-
bon of the candle in supporting the
flame corresponds to the breath of life
or spirit of life which unites with the
physical organism in producing soul or
intelligent existence. If an accident
should occur which would destroy the
candle, the flame, of course, would
cease; so if a human or animal body
be destroyed, as by consumption or ac-
cident, the soul, the life, the intelli-
gence, ceases.

Or if the supply of air were cut off
from the candle-flame, as by an exting-
uisher or snuffer, or by submerging
the candle in water, the light would be
extinguished even though the candle
remained unimpaired. So the soul, life,
existence, of man or animal would
cease if the breath of life were cut off
by drowning or asphyxiation, while
the body might be comparatively
sound. As the lighted candle might be
used under favorable conditions to
light other candles, but the flame, once
extinguished, the candle could neither
relight itself nor other candles, so the
human or animal body while alive,
as a living soul or being can, under
divine arrangement, start or propagate
other souls or beings—offspring; but
so soon as the spark of life is gone,
soul or being has ceased, and all power
to think, feel or propagate has ceased.
In harmony with this we read in the
Scriptures of Jacob's children: "All the
souls that came out of the loins of
Jacob were seventy souls." (Exod. 1:5.)

Jacob received his spark of life as well
as his physical organism, and hence the
united product of these, his soul or
intelligent being, from Isaac, and thence
from Adam, to whom alone God ever
directly imparted life. And Jacob
passed on the life and organism and
soul to his posterity; and so with all
humanity.

A candle might be relighted by any
one having the ability; but by divine
arrangement the human body, bereft
of the spark of life, "wasteth away,"
"returneth to the dust from which it
was taken," and the spark of life can-
not be re-enchanted except by divine
power, a miracle. The promise of
resurrection is therefore a promise of
a relighting, a re-enchanted of animal
existence or soul; and since there can
be no being or soul without a body and
restored life-power or spirit, it follows
that a promised resurrection or restora-
tion of soul or being implies new bodies,
new organisms. Thus the Scriptures
assure us that human bodies which re-
turn to dust will not be restored, but
that in the resurrection God will give
such new bodies as it may please him
to give.—1 Cor. 15:37-40.

The Apostle here declares that in the
resurrection there will be a special
class accounted worthy of a new na-
ture, spiritual instead of human or
fleshy; and, as we should expect, he
shows that this great change of na-
ture will be effected by giving these a
different kind of body. The candle may
here again serve to illustrate: Suppose
the fleshy or human nature to be illus-
trated by a tallow candle, the new
body might be illustrated by a wax
candle of a brighter flame or indeed
by an electric arc-light apparatus.

With any power and wisdom less

QUESTIONS WITH INSPIRED ANSWERS

Question.—Are the promises to the
saints of the Gospel Age heavenly or
earthly promises?

Answer.—"As we have borne the im-
age of the earthly, we shall also bear
the image of the heavenly." We are
"partakers of the heavenly calling."—
1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 3:1;
6:4; Phil. 3:14; Eph. 2:6, 7; 2 Thess.
1:11, 12; 2 Tim. 1:9, 10.

Question.—Will the elect Church, the
"overcomers," the "saints," continue to
be human beings, "of the earth
earthly?"

Answer.—"God hath given unto us
exceeding great and precious promises,
that by these we might become partak-
ers of the divine nature"—"new
creatures."—2 Pet. 1:4; 2 Cor. 5:17;
Rom. 8:17, 18.

Question.—When will the full change
(begun in us by a change of heart,
called the begetting of the spirit) be
completed?—When shall we be made
like Christ our Lord?

Answer.—"We [saints] shall all be
changed."—"The dead [saints]
shall be raised incorruptible, and we
shall be changed, in a moment, in the
tinkling of an eye . . . this mortal
shall put on immortality." "Sown a
natural [animal] body, it is raised a
spiritual body." "Thus is the [special]
resurrection of the [special, elect]
dead."—1 Cor. 15:50-53, 42-44; Phil.
3:11.

Question.—Are full recompenses,
either rewards or punishments, to be
expected before the resurrection?

Answer.—"Thou shalt be recom-
pensed at the resurrection of the just."
—Luke 14:14; Rev. 11:18; Matt. 16:27.

Question.—What is the hope held out
for all except the elect Church of the
Gospel Age?

Answer.—"The whole [human] crea-
tion groaneth and travaileth in pain to-
gether until now, waiting for the mani-
festation of the sons of God [the
saints]." Then shall follow "times of
restitution of all things which God hath
spoken by the mouth of all his holy
prophets since the world began," in
which "all the families of the earth
shall be blessed" through the elect
"Seed" of Abraham.—Rom. 8:22, 19;
Acts 3:19-21; Gal. 3:16, 29.

Question.—Are the dead conscious or
unconscious?

Answer.—"The dead know not any-
thing."—Eccl. 9:5; Psa. 146:4; Isa.
38:18, 19.

Question.—Have the departed saints
been praising the Lord all along during
the past ages?

Answer.—"The dead praise not the
Lord."—Psa. 115:17, 6:5; Eccl. 9:6.

Question.—Did the prophets receive
their reward at death? or was it re-
served in God's plan to be given them
at the beginning of the Millennium, the
age of judgment?

Answer.—"The time of the dead, that
they should be judged, and that thou
shouldest give reward unto thy servants
the prophets," is at the beginning of
the sounding of the last trumpet, the
seventh trumpet, at the end of the Gos-
pel Age.—Rev. 11:15, 18; Psa. 17:15.

Question.—Were the apostles prom-
ised translation to heaven at death?—
or must they wait for the Lord's second
coming?

than that of our Creator guaranteeing
the resurrection, we might justly fear
some break or slip by which the iden-
tity would be lost, especially with those
granted the great change of nature by
a share in the first (chief) resurrec-
tion to spirit being. But we can se-
curely trust this and all things to him
with whom we have to do in this mat-
ter. He who knows our very thoughts
can reproduce them in the new brains
so that not one valuable lesson or pre-
cious experience shall be lost. He is
too wise to err and too good to be un-
kind; and all that he has promised he
will fulfill in a manner exceedingly
abundantly better than we can ask
or think.

The terms body, soul and spirit may
be used of the Church collectively. For
instance, the Apostle says: "I pray
God [that] your whole spirit, soul and
body be preserved blameless, unto the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1
Thess. 5:23.) This prayer must be un-
derstood to apply to the Church as a
whole—the elect church, whose names
are written in heaven. The true spirit
has been preserved in the little flock.
Its body is discernible to-day, also, not-
withstanding the multitudes of tares
that would hide as well as choke it.
And its soul, its activity, its intelli-
gence, its sentient being, is in evidence
everywhere, lifting up the standard of
the people—the cross, the ransom.

In no other way could we apply the
Apostle's words; for, however much
people may differ respecting the pre-
servation of the individual spirits and
souls of the people addressed, all will
agree that their bodies have not been
preserved, but have returned to dust,
like those of others. Besides, the words
body, soul and spirit are in the singu-
lar, not in the plural.

Answer.—"The Lord knoweth how to
. . . reserve the unjust unto the day
of judgment [the Millennial Day] to
be punished."—2 Pet. 2:9; Job. 21:30.

Question.—What will be the end of
those who when tried are found incor-
rigible—wilfully wicked?

Answer.—They shall "go away into a
cutting off from life," "be punished with
everlasting destruction [a destruction
which will never be terminated by a
resurrection];" for still "The wages of
sin is death," "the Second Death;" and
still the gift of God, eternal life, is to
be had only in Christ. "He that hath
the Son hath life;" he that hath not
the Son shall not receive that gift.—
Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:14, 15; Matt. 25:46;
1 John 5:12; 2 Thess. 1:9.

Questions for the Reader.

Question.—If hell (sheol) is a place
of living torture, lighted with flames
and hideous with the curses of its oc-
cupants suffering torture, either men-
tal or physical, why do the Scriptures
declare it to be a place or state of
silence, darkness, forgetfulness and ab-
solute unconsciousness?—Psa. 88:3-12;
6:5; Job 10:21, 22; Eccl. 9:10; Psa.
146:4; Isa. 38:18.

Question.—If God is able to destroy
both soul and body in the Second
Death, and if he declares that he will
destroy the wilfully and intelligently
wicked, will not this prove that there
will be no such thing as everlasting sin
and everlasting agony? And does not
this clear God's character from charges
of injustice?

Question.—Are not these propositions
intimately associated with all the
doubts which have troubled you since
you became a Christian, and perhaps
before? And would not their Scrip-
tural solution greatly assist in rooting,
grounding and establishing your faith
in the Bible as the inspired Word of
God? This has been the blessed result
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doubtful, skeptical and unsettled Chris-
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And for the crown to wait;

Upon the brow to bear no trace
Of more than common care;
To write no secret in the face
For men to read it there;
The daily cross to clasp and bless
With such familiar zeal
As hides from all that not the less
It's daily weight you feel;

In toils that praise will never pay
To see your life go past;
To meet in every coming day
Twin sister of the last;
To hear of high, heroic things,
And yield them reverence due,
But feel life's daily offerings
Are far more fit for you;

To woo no secret, soft disguise,
To which self-love is prone;
Unnoticed by all other eyes,
Unworthy in your own;
To light with such a happy art
That no one thinks you care,
Yet say to your poor bleeding heart,
How little you can bear;

Oh! 'tis a pathway rough to choose,
A struggle hard to share,
For human pride would still refuse
The nameless trials there;
But since we know the gate is low
That leads to heavenly bliss,
What higher grace could God bestow
Than such a life as this.

Thieves in Paradise

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"WHERE ARE THE DEAD?"

This sermon was published in a recent issue of BIBLE STUDENTS.
The interest aroused and the great demand for copies of this sermon
has been remarkable. A sample copy will be mailed to any one free.

Electing Kings

Give Diligence, Brethren, to Make Your Calling and Election Sure.—2 Pet. 1:10.

Throughout the length and breadth of this land of liberty, young and old understand full well the significance of election. Councilmen, aldermen, mayors of cities, county officials, State officials, United States Congressmen, Senators, the President and Vice-President are chosen or elected from amongst the people to their various official stations. They are chosen with a view to the blessing that will accrue to the electors by the exercise of their official positions. How strange, then, that we who are so familiar with these things should read into our text so very different a view of election!

The thought should naturally suggest itself to us that if God is electing or selecting a Church in the present time, it must be with a view to the use of that Church subsequently to serve in some manner the interests of the remainder of the world, from amongst whom they were elected. And this is just what the Scriptures teach; namely, that Christ Jesus himself is the Head, the Captain, the Chief Ruler, and that this "elect" company are, figuratively speaking, his "members," his associates, his under-priesthood. The Scriptures tell us that this selection is according to Divine foreknowledge and foreordination. They tell us that God foreknew our Lord Jesus as the one who would occupy the glorious position of Prophet, Priest, Mediator and King of the world during the Millennium. They tell us also that the same God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ foreknew us also and "predestinated" that there should be a Church class selected from amongst the world, to be their Redeemer's associate, his under-priesthood, his subordinate kings during the Millennium.

The Elect Now and Hereafter.

The Church is spoken of as God's "elect" now, before the election has been finished; before the testing is completed; before the called have been proven faithful and worthy. These are "elect" in the sense of having been nominated—"moved and seconded." God moved that they should be elected, and "called them with a heavenly calling." It remained for the called ones themselves to "second the motion" by presenting themselves in full consecration of heart to the Lord. But this was not sufficient; for the invited ones were recognized as imperfect and unable to come up to the requirements of the call. Hence it was necessary that the Lord Jesus Christ should become their surety and agree out of his own fulness of merit to supply all of their lack, their imperfection. And this he gladly does by applying for such the merit of his sin-atonement-sacrifice finished at Calvary.

Making the Election Sure.

Keeping before our minds that the heavenly Father made the motion or the call, that we seconded it by accepting the call upon its terms of faith and consecration unto death, and that our Lord Jesus is our surety who will make good our unintentional blemishes, what shall we say of the prospects of our being elected and at whose door shall we lay the responsibility if we are not elected? Surely the unchangeable God who nominated us has made every provision for our election and will co-operate. Surely our Redeemer, our Surety, our Advocate, will give us every assistance in the way and, according to his promise, cause all things to work together for our good. Just as surely, therefore, the entire responsibility for failure would lie at our door. And this is what St. Peter in our text declares, "Make your calling and election sure."

From this standpoint we have a special interest in our own election, such as we never had before when we misunderstood the entire matter. Once in our ignorance we thought that St. Peter had written foolishly about our making the election sure; for according to the erroneous theory which we had "swallowed" without proper mastication, God was doing all the electing himself, and had unalterably fixed our destiny as eternal glory or eternal suffering, long centuries before we were born.

This erroneous view blinded our mental sight from all the various incentives which now are so precious and so helpful. What had God elected us to be and to do? To sit upon a cloud and to play upon a harp and to sing to all eternity, cheerfully looking over the battlements of heaven to see our dear friends writhing in torment, and striving hard to praise God for it all and to think of his course in our election and their damnation as the exemplification of Justice and of Love?

We read indeed in the Scriptures respecting a Kingdom, for which our

Lord taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven," yet the thralldom of error upon us was so tense that we recognized not the inconsistency between these promises and our false hopes. Now, thank God, "the mystery" is revealed to us in God's Word and by his Spirit, and we perceive that the Millennial Kingdom is to be a reality and that its blessing to mankind in general, "to all the families of the earth," is to be most thorough, most systematic, most complete, and in the end entirely satisfactory.

Kings to Be Elected.

What an interest we properly take in this matter of our election, after learning that the office for which we are running is a combination of priesthood and kingship! The elect are to be priestly kings, or, otherwise styled, "a Royal Priesthood." Their glorious service is to be for a period of one thousand years, during which they will be kings and priests unto God and will reign on the earth (Revelation xx, 4).

They will not "reign on the earth" in the sense of being earthly beings, having earthly courts and thrones; their resurrection "change" will constitute them heavenly or spirit beings; they will be invisible to mankind, as now the "Prince of this world" is invisible and as the holy angels are invisible. But they will possess heavenly power and authority and wisdom and grace. By these glorious attributes they will be able to serve God and humanity by a reign of righteousness, whose uplifting or restitution influences (Acts iii, 21) will begin with the living generations, but eventually extend to "all the families of the earth," who have been going down for the past six thousand years into the great prison-house of death—"prisoners of hope," however, because of the promise of God's Word and the redemption sacrifice of Jesus.

My beloved hearers, if your hearts are not moved by this message of God's grace and this information respecting his Kingdom and of your prospects of becoming kings and priests in that Kingdom, it is because you do not believe the message—because your faith does not properly grasp the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word (II Peter i, 4). I am aware that this whole message by Jesus and his apostles has been so long covered by the rubbish of "the dark ages" that it was lost to our sight for a long while, and sadly we missed its encouragement to faithfulness. I am glad, however, that now our eyes of understanding are opening to see the length and breadth and height and depth in the great Divine Plan of the Ages.

The Value of Earthly Crowns.

Consider for a moment what fabulous prices have been paid for earthly crowns! Thousands of lives have been sacrificed and millions of money, to gain an earthly crown. And thousands who paid this price knew well that "uneasy rests the head which wears the crown." They knew well, too, that its tenure would be precarious and that the attainment of it would bring them lasting hatred from others who aspired to the same position and who considered that their right to it was as good or better.

What comparison should we institute as between the value of such a crown and the "crown of glory," honor and immortality which God has promised to his elect—to such of them as make their calling and their election sure! Has God placed too high a valuation upon the heavenly crown, in demanding that those who would share it with the Redeemer must prove their loyalty to him and to the principles of righteousness, and to the spirit of love, to the extent of laying down their lives in his service and in "doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith"?

Our Lord asked wherein would be the profit to any man if he were to gain the whole world and lose his own soul—lose his future life. For the purpose of our present topic we might ask a modified question, namely: If one should gain the empire of the whole world and all of its riches, and if another should gain this heavenly election to the heavenly Kingdom of one thousand years and to subsequent eternal blessings with the Lord, which of these would choose the better part—which would show the real wisdom, and which would be the foolish one? But the contrast increases when we note that the dominion of earth cannot be secured by our sailing through bloody seas, and that a mere competency of earthly wealth is attained by only one of a thousand

who strive for it day and night. Surely from the standpoint of the Father's Word all earthly honors are vanities, in comparison with the heavenly glories and blessings which may be surely attained by the "called" of this Gospel Age—if they will but follow the Divine directions.

Terms and Conditions of Election.

In our context St. Peter tells us upon what terms the called and accepted may make their election sure. After calling our attention to God's exceeding great and precious promises he tells us that they were given us to the intent that they should operate in our minds so as to influence our lives, in harmony with the Divine will, and that thus we may "become partakers of the divine nature, after having escaped the corruption that is in the world through desire,"—selfishness, lust (verse 4). He proceeds to amplify, and urges that such as have this hope shall give all diligence to the matter of adding to their faith virtue or fortitude. That is to say, faith of itself is very good as a start, but God requires more than this. As a condition of our acceptance for election he requires that our faith shall be of a strong kind, giving us fortitude for all of life's affairs; for all of our covenants with the Lord; for a faithful endurance of opposition, contradiction, etc., that thus we might be copies of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God has ordained all of "the elect" must be (Romans viii, 29).

Not only must we have a strong faith combined with fortitude, but we must also add "knowledge." We required some knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus and of the Gospel message before we could come unto the Lord at all, but the Apostle is not referring to this, our earliest knowledge. He is addressing Christians who have already taken the first steps. He assures us that they need knowledge to enable them to go onward in Christian development—knowledge in addition to their faith and fortitude. We have nothing to say against worldly knowledge, scientific knowledge, etc., when these do not cross or interfere with the Divine Revelation, but we are confident that the Apostle did not intend to refer to worldly knowledge, but to the greatest of all scientific knowledge—the knowledge of God.

How shall we know God? By study of his character. Our Lord Jesus it was who declared, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John xvii, 3). This knowledge at the present time is a secret knowledge and, as the Apostle says, a "hidden mystery," which can be known only by those who put themselves into a certain attitude of heart and mind and conduct toward the Lord and his revelation. We are to study God's character—to learn respecting his Justice, his Wisdom, his Love and his Power, by studying his revelation—the Bible. In it we see his dealings past, and his promises respecting his dealings future. And a correct appreciation of these gives us a knowledge of God's character as exemplified therein. But since this knowledge is not stated in terms for the world to understand, it follows that only those in proper condition of heart and enlightened by the holy Spirit can receive this knowledge. It is taught only to the pupils in

the School of Christ. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his Covenant."

Other Graces to Be Added.

The Apostle continues his advice as to things necessary to be added by those who would make their calling and election sure. They must keep adding, and the adding must be little by little and day by day. The knowledge we gain of God through his Word should lead us to greater moderation (translated, **temperance**, in our common version). "Let your moderation be known unto all men" (Philippians iv, 5), moderation or balance in thought, in word, in action. God's people may be called extremists by those who are not begotten of the holy Spirit and who know not "the mystery." But even they should be able to charge **immoderation** only on the one score—our immoderation, our faithfulness to the Word of the Lord and to our covenant of self sacrifice as followers in the footsteps of Jesus. Our lives should be so moderate as respects business and pleasure and food and raiment, etc., that we should be examples of wisdom and moderation to all—extremists only along the same lines that Jesus and the Apostles were counted extremists by those who knew not, neither did understand "the mystery" of their endeavor to be of "the very elect."

Patience must not be forgotten. In addition to moderation, "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Next add godlikeness—general goodness, benevolence, benignity toward all. Add next brotherly kindness—in the natural family relationship, and also in the spiritual family, the Church. "Love as brethren" (ought to love). "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." Still further the Apostle urges that while all of the foregoing are elements of love we super-add love itself in the fullest sense toward the Lord, toward the brethren, toward humanity, toward the brute creation and toward our enemies. While all of these cannot be loved in the same degree, all should profit by the spirit of love in our hearts for all.

"Ye Shall Never Fail."

Now comes the climax of the advice to those seeking to make their calling and election sure (verse 8). "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." And then, as our text declares, if these things abound and if we give diligence to the making sure of our calling and election and do these things, we shall never fail—we shall in no case fail of securing our election. God seeketh such for joint-heirship with their Redeemer in the Kingdom. God "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth."

The grand consummation of our election—our Kingdom honors and glories—is specifically referred to by St. Peter in the next verse, saying, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If, dear Brethren, we believe these things, let us permit them to control our lives—our words, our deeds and our thoughts.

"Studies in the Scriptures"

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Some Still Remember "Bill Arp."

Such will be interested in the "Southern Philosopher's" review of the first volume of Series I. He wrote some time before he died:

"It is impossible to read this book without loving the writer and pondering his wonderful solution of the great mysteries that have troubled us all our lives. There is hardly a family to be

found that has not lost some loved one who died outside the church—outside the plan of salvation, and, if Calvinism be true, outside of all hope and inside of eternal torment and despair. We smother our feelings and turn away from the horrible picture. We dare not deny the faith of our fathers, and yet can it be possible that the good mother and the wandering child are forever separated?—forever and forever?

"I believe it is the rigidity of these teachings that makes atheists and infidels and skeptics—makes Christians unhappy and brings their gray hairs down in sorrow to the grave—a lost child, a lost soul!"

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"There is nothing in the Bible that the author denies or doubts, but there are many texts that he throws a flood of light upon that seems to remove from them the dark and gloomy meaning. I see that editors of leading journals and many orthodox ministers of different denominations have endorsed it and have confessed to this new and comforting light that has dawned upon the interpretation of God's book. Then let every man read and ponder and take comfort.

DO YOU KNOW?

Matters of Interest and Importance to all Thinking People, Especially to Christians.

DO YOU KNOW that the Lord more than two thousand years ago gave, through the Prophet Daniel, a clear description of the times in which we are now living?

DO YOU KNOW that the Bible, in referring to this present time as "the time of the end," does not signify the destruction of the earth, but the end of the present dispensation, after which a new age will be introduced—the Millennium? "The earth abideth forever."—Ecl. 1:4.

DO YOU KNOW, or have you specially noticed, the several propositions in Daniel's prophecy concerning "the time of the end"? They read thus:—In the time of the end (1) many shall run to and fro; (2) and knowledge shall be increased; (3) and the wise [virgins] shall understand; (4) but none of the wicked shall understand. (5) And at that time Michael [Christ] shall stand up [begin his reign]; (6) and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.—Dan. 12:9, 4, 10, 1.

DO YOU KNOW that according to the Scriptures "the time of the end," above mentioned, began in A. D. 1799, and will continue until A. D. 1915?

DO YOU KNOW that the most rapid means of communication in 1799, the beginning of "the time of the end," was on horseback, while now telephones and telegraphs unite cities, nations and continents?

DO YOU KNOW that the first effective steamboat was built A. D. 1806? and that the first effective locomotive, the Ironsides, was built A. D. 1831?

DO YOU KNOW that Sir Isaac Newton, the great Christian philosopher, who died A. D. 1727, studying this very prophecy, said, on the strength of it, "I should not wonder if some day men will travel at the rate of fifty miles an hour?"

DO YOU KNOW that Voltaire, the great infidel philosopher, who died A. D. 1778, when much more was known of the power of steam, despising this prophecy of God's Word, declared that it had made a fool of Sir Isaac Newton when it led him to make the above statement?

DO YOU KNOW that the predicted "running to and fro" is being fulfilled by yourself and others as you travel everywhere by steamboat, steam and electric cars, etc.?

DO YOU KNOW that knowledge is greatly increased, in harmony with the prophecy?—and can you not discern such plain signs of the times in which we are now living?

DO YOU KNOW that less than four centuries ago illiteracy was so general that the English Parliament passed a law providing for those of its members who were unable to read; while now ability to read and write is general, even amongst the poorest classes?

DO YOU KNOW that free schools were started as Sunday Schools in 1784, and hence that knowledge began to increase greatly with "the time of the end," 1799?

DO YOU KNOW that not a single one of the now many large Bible Societies or Tract Societies was started until 1804, because only then was there much use for reading matter for the masses?

DO YOU KNOW that a right understanding of God's Word not only adds to the wisdom of the wise, but also "maketh wise the simple?"—Psa. 19:7.

DO YOU KNOW that God promised that in this "time of the end," in which we are living, the wise [toward God—not the worldly-wise] should understand the hitherto secret things of his plan and Word?—and do you wish to be one of God's humble "wise virgins?"—1 Cor. 3:18-20.

DO YOU KNOW that the present social order is not thoroughly satisfactory to any good men—rich or poor—although no human instrumentality is able to arrange for and introduce a better one?

DO YOU KNOW that Christ will introduce a better, a perfect, social arrangement during the Millennium; and that he taught us to expect, watch for,

and pray for that Kingdom; saying, "Pray ye—thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven"? If you have sincerely joined in that prayer, you will rejoice in the evidences that its fulfillment is at hand.

DO YOU KNOW that the blessings of the Millennial age are the theme of "all the holy prophets"?

DO YOU KNOW that the Millennial age was specially preached about by the Apostles as "The Day of Christ," "The Kingdom of God," etc.—and that it was the earnest faith of the early Church?—Phil. 1:6; Mark 1:14.

DO YOU KNOW of the Apostle Peter's reference to it, in Acts 3:19, 21, where he calls it "the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets"?

DO YOU KNOW that St. Peter there declares that these times of blessing will not precede, but will follow, the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus?

DO YOU KNOW that the prophecies and signs which now herald the second advent of Christ are much more distinct than were those signs and prophecies which marked his first advent?

DO YOU KNOW that the driving of the Jews out of all nations and the resettlement of many of them in Palestine, now in progress, is another sign of the close of the Gospel age and the dawn of the Millennium?—Jer. 16:15; Rom. 11:25-32.

DO YOU KNOW that the Second Coming of Christ will be as different from human expectation as was his first advent? and that his day will come upon the world unawares—that they will be "in his days" and that only the wise will know it?

DO YOU KNOW that the object of the Second Coming of Christ, as well as its manner, is generally misunderstood? that his coming, according to the Scriptures, means the blessing of all the families of the earth?

DO YOU KNOW that the Church which God is electing or selecting during this Gospel age is promised a spiritual or heavenly reward?—to be "made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4), and to share with Christ the work of blessing the world during the Millennium, but that the Lord's provision for those who accept his grace during the Millennial age is a restitution or restoration of the perfections of human nature (lost by sin), in Paradise restored—the new earth?—Acts 3:19-21; Rev. 21:1-4.

DO YOU KNOW that the Day of Judgment will be a thousand-year-day, and not a twenty-four-hour-day?—and that the word judgment implies, not merely a sentence, but also a trial?—II. Pet. 3:8.

DO YOU KNOW that during the world's great day of trial or judgment (the Millennium) the Church now being selected from among men will be, with Christ, the Judges of the world? (I. Cor. 6:2)—that to prepare them for that service they themselves are now severely tried in all points, that they may be able to sympathize with those whom they will then judge?—and that they shall be kings and priests of God and, as Abraham's Seed, bless all the families of the earth?—Rev. 20:4; Gal. 3:16, 29; Gen. 22:18.

DO YOU KNOW that not all who worship and say, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into or be members of that elect Church? (Matt. 7:21-23)—and that not all who have their names upon earthly Church rolls, but only those "whose names are written in heaven," and whose names will not be blotted out because of unfaithfulness, will constitute the one Church of the living God—in all a "little flock"?—Heb. 12:23; Rev. 3:5; 1 Tim. 3:15; Luke 12:32.

DO YOU KNOW that all the members of the Church are now only probationary members, waiting and striving and hoping for full membership in the Church triumphant at the "First Resurrection"?—Rev. 20:4.

DO YOU KNOW that the large majority of humanity has never had any trial, because they died in total ignor-

ance of the only name given whereby they can be saved?

DO YOU KNOW that the Apostle Paul declares that there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all [men], to be testified [to all men] in due time?—1 Tim. 2:6.

DO YOU KNOW that while to many of us the "due time" to learn of this grace of God is during the present life, yet to the vast majority this "due time" must be in a future life; because less than one-third of the human family have ever heard of, so that they could believe on, the only name "under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"?—Acts 4:12.

DO YOU KNOW that the Millennial age is for the very purpose of causing the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, and to open the eyes of men's understanding and to unstop their ears that they may hear God's message of mercy, and see "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"?—Isa. 11:9; 35:5; John 1:9.

DO YOU KNOW that some living in civilized lands have never had a full opportunity to show whether they would choose righteousness or sin; because they have had comparatively little knowledge of righteousness, by either experience or observation, and great experience only with sin, within and without?

DO YOU KNOW that our Lord Jesus paid the great price for all; to secure for all a FULL OPPORTUNITY to gain everlasting life by faith and obedience?—1 Tim. 2:6; Acts 3:22, 23.

DO YOU KNOW that Christ "is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins, and not for ours [the Church's sins] only, but also for the sins of the whole world"?—1 John 2:2.

DO YOU KNOW that the Bible teaches both the doctrine of Election and the doctrine of Free Grace?—the election of the Church during this age, and free grace for the world in general in the Millennial age? and that this harmony, of these two doctrines so long supposed to be in conflict, can be clearly shown from the Scriptures?

DO YOU KNOW that 6,000 years of Earth's history is past, according to Bible Chronology?—and that the seventh thousand is the Millennium of Christ's reign?—and that the present time, from 1875 to 1915, is the lapping period styled in Scripture the "harvest" of the age, in which the number of the elect Church will be completed?—and that then the Millennial age will be ushered in by a "great time of trouble" (anarchy, etc., mentioned repeatedly in Scripture), which will level society, humble pride and prepare the way for Immanuel's long promised Kingdom—"under the whole heavens"?—Dan. 2:28, 44; 7:13, 14, 18, 22, 27.

DO YOU KNOW that "in that day" [now come] there will be wise virgins as well as foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1,—*virgin signifies pure*), but that only the wise [the obedient] shall understand?

DO YOU KNOW that the "wise virgins" who shall enter in with the Bridegroom will have oil in their vessels [the spirit of the truth in their hearts and lives] as well as in their lamps [the Scriptures]?—and that it is declared that "none of the wicked shall understand" (Dan. 12:10; 1 Cor. 2:14), but only the humble and consecrated—the wise?—And do you wish to be one of the "wise virgins"?

DO YOU KNOW that the Apostle tells us that although the "day of the Lord" shall come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, yet the brethren of Christ will not be in darkness?—1 Thes. 5:4. Note also Luke 21:34, 35.

FREE LITERATURE.

Send postal-card request to the editor for free copies of this paper. Some of the interesting subjects you may have for asking are:

Calamities—Why Permitted?
What Is the Soul?
Where Are the Dead?
What Is Sheol—Hades—Hell?
Do You Believe in the Resurrection of the Dead?
Why Financiers Tremble.
Armageddon.
Spiritism is demonism.
Mormonism—Mysteries Explained.
The Divine Law.
The Sabbath Question.
Earthquakes in Prophecy.

DO YOU KNOW that "the time is short" in which the consecrated may "make their calling and election sure" and "so run as to obtain" the great prize of this gospel age—viz., joint heirship with Christ in his Kingdom?

DO YOU KNOW that the powers of the heavens [the nominal Church] are being shaken, and that soon there will be a great union or "confederacy" of all denominations of nominal Christians (See Isa. 8:10-16), in fulfillment of the statement that "the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll"—while men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking forward to those things coming upon the earth?—Luke 21:26; Rev. 6:14; Isa. 34:4.

DO YOU KNOW whether or not you have put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand in this evil day already upon us?—Eph. 6:13.

DO YOU KNOW that to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil in this evil day you need the whole armor of God—the helmet (an intellectual protection from the assaults of error); as well as a substantial shield of faith and ability to wield "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God"?

DO YOU KNOW that God has provided this armor complete and special food—"meat in due season" for the household of faith in the present time—things new as well as old? (Matt. 13:52; 24:45)—and that riches of grace and knowledge relative to the divine plan, never possible before this "harvest," may now be enjoyed by you, if you are wholly the Lord's?

DO YOU KNOW that the same prophet, Daniel, predicted that, after the running to and fro had generally increased knowledge amongst men, discontent would become general and that there would be "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation"?—Dan. 12:1.

DO YOU KNOW that this trouble will be socialistic and eventually anarchistic, and, according to the Scriptures, result in the downfall of all the kingdoms of the world and thus make ready for Christ's Millennial Kingdom?—See "SCRIPTURE STUDIES," VOL. I., Chaps. xiii-xv.

DO YOU KNOW that "SCRIPTURE STUDIES," VOL. I., is reclaiming more infidels, helping more Skeptics and establishing more Christians than any other book in the world? It is indeed a "Bible Key" and "A Helping Hand for Bible Students."

DO YOU KNOW that we can supply you helpful literature, on all these subjects which will in every case cite you, not to the creeds and opinions of fallible men, however good, but to the words of our Lord, the apostles and prophets?—"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—1 Cor. 2:5, 9-14.

DO YOU KNOW that many of the most prominent ministers of the various denominations are preaching on every other subject than the gospel, while some of them are denying the fall, the redemption and a coming restitution, so clearly taught in the Bible, and teaching, instead, Evolution?—yea, and even denying the inspiration of the Bible?

DO YOU KNOW that meanwhile a famine prevails—not a famine for bread, nor for water, but for the hearing [understanding] of the Word of the Lord?—See Amos 8:11.

DO YOU KNOW that the Lord is raising up many who are voluntarily giving their time and going from house to house to call attention to these matters and that if "one of the least of these," the Lord's "little ones"—an angel or messenger of the Truth—should at any time call upon you, and be received in a spirit of meekness and love, he will show you, free of charge, the *Chart of the Ages*, the examination of which will help you to "rightly divide the word of truth" and to apply and understand all Scriptures, and thus prove a great and lasting blessing to you?

DO YOU KNOW that we are the friends of all who are trusting in the precious blood of Christ, and who are consecrated to his service?—and that we will be glad to have such (and honest skeptics as well) write to us upon these subjects? and that if you are poor we will gladly supply you spiritual food and drink free?