

WORD AND WORK

ALL THINGS.

My foemen throng before with purpose grim;
But, trusting in the Lord of Life, I go;
All things for me are possible with Him.
I see no path; but His clear light I see.

I have no strength. He makes his strength my own;
It is my faith in Him that foemen flee.
Through sorrow's wilds, deep-veiled with shadows dim,
I go sustained; my heart, rejoicing, sings:

"All things for me are possible with Him."
So following faith unto life's last far rim,
My Lost and Loved to me shall be restored:
E'en this for me is possible with Him.

—A. Rutledge, in *Youth's Companion*.

WORDS IN SEASON.

R. H. B.

"STUDY TO BE QUIET."

We are living in turbulent times. There are strifes and clashes and hatreds and animosities of all sorts: racial, international, sectional, political, religious; class-hatreds; clan-hatreds; industrial, commercial, economic frictions, and what not. There are men and papers and societies and organizations whose one prime business it is to stir hate. One contingent has it in for the Jews; others try to fan the fires between whites and blacks; another seeks to stir up religious passions and prejudices. All sorts of issues and problems are made the occasion of disturbance and even of violent demonstration.

But in the midst of all this the voice of God says to His people: "Study to be quiet." It is their part in the world to attend to their own business, to treat every man with equity and kindness, and to testify to all, in word and life, the gospel of the grace of God. As for the world: we are not of it. We are not its reformers; much less are we revolutionists and radicals. We do not participate in its movements and strifes; we do not share in its plans and purposes; we do not belong to its clans. We are not to be yoked with the world in any sort of fellowship, partnership, or bond; but bidden to come out from among them and be separate (2 Cor. :14-18) and in the power of such a separation to bear the Divine message of reconciliation to weary hearts. The moving of strife and sedition; the fomenting of hate and

passion, the stirring up of mob and violence belongs entirely to those "sons of tumult" whom God will destroy. But Christians are children of peace.

FACING ROME-WARD.

It is rather remarkable, and perhaps to be regarded as indicative of our times, that such a letter as the subjoined could emanate from a "ministerial association," a body composed of Protestant ministers of the city of "orthodox" and evangelical convictions.

To the Pastors of the Churches Represented in the Louisville Ministerial Association.

Dear Brother:

At the meeting of the Association, held Monday, April 3rd, the undersigned were, by unanimous action appointed a Committee to secure, if possible, a more general observance by all our people of the day, long kept in memory of the Crucifixion of our common Lord Jesus Christ, by many Christian people, commonly known as Good Friday.

The Association was of the opinion that this observance would be of Spiritual value to all who would consent to engage in it. This can be more readily accomplished in our city this year, because our Public schools will be closed on Thursday and Friday, April 13th and 14th.

May we not then, ask, that during the hours our Blessed Redeemer hung upon the cross for us from noon to three o'clock say, our churches all be opened on Friday the 14th, and appropriate services held; or, if some other time be more convenient than that, let it be chosen for the same.

The observance by all Christian people of the death and passion of our Blessed Master for us, and the united prayers to God the Father, could not but have a most helpful influence upon the churches of our city.

One cannot help wondering what the significance of this might be. It certainly indicates no trend toward a purer faith. It is indeed but an "opinion" of theirs that such observance of "Good Friday" would be of great spiritual value. But it is an opinion derived from Rome, and one directly opposed to the apostolic teaching. "Ye observe days and months and seasons and years" wrote Paul to the Galatian brethren—"I am afraid of you lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain." (Gal. 4:10, 11). With great carefulness did the Wisdom of God avoid giving occasion to the human tendency of idolizing persons, places, and days. Neither of the person of Christ nor of His apostles, have we any description from which a picture might be mentally formed or drawn on paper. None of the spots of His birth, His baptism, His transfiguration, His crucifixion, His burial and resurrection, are exactly known. Nor does any man know the day of His birth (for all the great "Christmas" ado every December) nor of His death. God carefully concealed these things from men, lest they debase the pure, spiritual worship of the New Testament. Yet nothing else would do them. Lacking any real basis for pictures and images they produced ideal ones and used them idolatrously. Not knowing the location of sacred events they built their shrines at the most plausible places. In default of the real dates they set arbitrary dates for great spiritual festivals, for blow-outs of religious fervor, and manufactured holy-days after their own heart.

There is but one "observance of the death and passion of our Blessed Master for us," and that is the continually recurring feast of the first day of the week when His people participate of the bread and the fruit of the vine in remembrance of Him "until He come." All else is vain and ultimately destructive.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Considerable notice has been given in the papers to the arrival of Sir Conan Doyle, who has come over from England to preach the doctrines of Spiritism to the susceptibles on this side of the Atlantic. Communication with the dead is not only possible, according to this gentleman, but a good thing and greatly to be desired to make one wise. He thinks it is "fundamental religion." He asserts that it is "in harmony with" the Bible (no doubt, for see 1 Sam. 28 and 1 Chron. 10:13). He does not shrink from claiming "Christ and His apostles" as fellow-Spiritualists, devotees with him of the noble cult of demonism!

Spiritism (generally called, Spiritualism) is almost as old as our fallen race. The awful warnings and condemnation of it in Leviticus and Deuteronomy reveal the fact that it was a very common thing among the degraded Canaanites. (Lev. 19:31; 20:6; Deut. 18:9-14). Mediums clairvoyants necromancers, (literally, "raisers of the dead") diviners and augurers were common as dirt then. Against their vile and wicked practices the God of the Bible voices His utter execration.

In our generation a new wave of Spiritism arose—something over a half century ago, in connection with the notorious Fox sisters of Hydesville, N. Y., which town enjoys the unenviable distinction of being the modern birth-place of the cult. Despite the sensational spread of this spook-religion it was for many years in contempt with the more educated classes. More recently, however, a Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, W. T. Stead, and Sir Conan Doyle—men of highest rank in science and in literature, and other prominent men, have endorsed and vindicated Spiritism and clothed it with respectability. The great war gave it a powerful impulse. It is getting a decided hold on all classes throughout the civilized world.

The significance of this fact is manifest. The Spirit of God declared expressly "that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron." (1 Tim. 4:1). This is Satan's method of bringing a Christ-rejecting world under the influence of lying spirits. The communion with disembodied intelligences will give an incalculable impulse to the modern apostasy (the "falling away") and will be the powerful means of introducing that "strong delusion" which is destined to sweep away like an overwhelming flood the multitude of those who received not the love of the truth and had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Tim. 2:11, 12). Infidel scholars, scoffers, and destructive critics who have denied their Master, time-serving preach-

ers, Bible-haters, and those enemies of the cross "whose God is the belly" and "who mind earthly things," will certainly be among those carried along with it.

With some astonishment we noticed that in the same paper telling of Conan Doyle's arrival on his spiritistic mission, a prominent preacher of this city, pastor of the First Christian Church, is reported to have spoken very favorably in his sermon the day before, of communicating with the dead and to have declared that it is only our dullness that hinders such communion at all. The same preacher's attitude was put beyond all doubt when the next day's paper mentioned the fact that he, among others, had signed an invitation to Conan Doyle to favor Louisville with a visit and lecture on Spiritism. Surely these are "signs of the times," indicative of the encroachment of that great final judicial delusion, under the spell of which men who have not received the love of the truth will fervently believe the great lie, that they may be damned.

THE OMITTED NAME

The preacher to whom the honor(?) fell to open the Disarmament conference in Washington with prayer complains through the dailies that he has been bitterly and unjustly criticised for omitting the name of Jesus Christ from that opening prayer. The papers report him as saying, "Had I been left to my own initiative I am very sure that I would have offered the prayer that I did in the name of Christ. I was reminded, however, that the conference was not a Christian body, that there would be Buddhists and Confucianists present, and was told that it was the feeling that a simple recognition of the deity would fill the requirements. I remembered [how fortunate that he "remembered" that just then!] that the prayer that Jesus taught and which we repeat from Sunday to Sunday did not contain his name and yet it had the spirit of Christ in it, as all will agree. I felt it would be better to offer a prayer of recognition of God Almighty and a petition for guidance than to have no prayer at all."

We do not wish to throw yet another stone at this man. His own explanation of his course is all-sufficient: no further accusation were needed. Out of his own mouth he stands judged and condemned. His attempt to excuse himself by the example of the "Lord's Prayer" merits no reply.

According to his own statement he was reminded that the name of his Lord would not be acceptable in that august assembly. Therefore he concluded that it would be better to leave the disliked Name out, lest the heathen present might resent it, perhaps even dislike the preacher himself for having violated the taboo. So it was thought best to "go direct" to "God Almighty" without troubling to refer to the One who is the only Way, through whom alone we have access to God. So everybody was pleased.

Now whether this is a case of Judas selling his Lord for a

price, or a case of Simon Peter who failed in testimony through human weakness will be decided by the attitude that preacher will take and hold in regard to the matter—whether he will continue to justify his course, or openly confess and repudiate the dishonor done to the Master who bought him.

Yet there are people who imagine that the Disarmament Conference is a triumph of Christianity, and an evidence of Christ's reign and a sign of a fast approaching millennium!

THE NEW TESTAMENT BOND OF PEACE AND UNITY.

"The conditions in the church are deplorable, Brother B. Suppose, for instance, there were no more order or rule or government in a worldly kingdom than there is in the church, what an anarchy and confusion we should have!"

"Very true, Brother A. But the kingdoms of the world have the advantage over the church in this matter."

"How, pray?"

"They have the right to devise and adopt any means and measures they deem good in order to control their people. If the church of Christ were free to do this, an efficient ecclesiastical government could easily be created, and obedience and order could be enforced. The Church of Rome did that; and the unity, solidarity, and order it has maintained through centuries shows how well their scheme works. But the church of Christ can adopt no human form of constitution and organization, nor any man-devised system of government. The New Testament church is limited to New Testament ways and means."

"That is true. But it seems that we are falling short. There are among us all manner of dissensions and divisions, factions and strifes. Ought not the New Testament means for government and unity be effective? Why do they fail?"

"The reason is plain: the New Testament means are perfectly successful in the hands of the right sort of New Testament people. God's road through the waters of the Red Sea answered its purpose perfectly: the people of God went through the sea safely and dry-shod. But the Egyptians assaying the same were drowned."

"What do you mean? Are we all Egyptians?"

"Not that. What I mean to say is that the way of faith cannot be travelled except by a people of faith. Nor can the New Testament means of church control be employed by any except by a people who have the New Testament spirit."

"And what do you say that New Testament spirit is?"

"It is the spirit of *love*. The mistake all along has been that we have tried to stand as the simple New Testament people and hold and maintain the New Testament order, in doctrine and practice without really loving one another. That cannot be done. *If we are not going to love one another* we shall either have to devise some human organization and system to hold us together (thus constituting ourselves a sect) or else go to pieces. And that is the way God wants it. Farewell, Brother A."

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A MONTHLY MAGAZINE WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO DECLARE THE
WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

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NEWS AND NOTES.

H. L. Olmstead held a week's meeting with the Portland Ave. Church, Louisville. He preached at the Highland Church April 9, and writes: "We had chairs in aisles Sunday morning. Fine attendance, so it looked, and fine spirit, so it seemed."

"We expect to sail from Liverpool for America on S. S. Canopic, due in Boston, about April 22. We expect to stop in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, and cannot tell exact time of arrival in Louisville.

"I was pleased to receive February W. W. in Paris, and from the balcony near the top of Eiffel Tower (nearly 1,000 feet high) I read the Fox Financial Report and other missionary news, it was "high-class" reading. I am behind with my travel letters since leaving Jerusalem, and mean to indite the next one soon."—Don Carlos Janes. "Welcome to our land and city."—Publisher.

In March, the *Word and Work* offered to send 75 copies "Great Songs of the Church" to Unity, Maine, if some one would supply \$20, about one-third their cost. Brother and Sister Wing, of Albion, Me., have supplied the amount, plus transportation. Now comes an inquiry from Brother Short of Forest Vale Mission, S. Africa—"What will 25 copies cost us?" Of course, we are going to answer, "Nothing." Who will give one-third the cost, about \$7?

Brother Boll preached four nights at Horse Cave, Ky., and is now in a meeting at Gallatin, Tenn.

Stanford Chambers, writing from New Orleans, April 15th: "J. M. Hottell in a splendid meeting here delivering good spiritual and scriptural messages that are sure to bear fruit. We hope Brother Hottell may like us well enough to locate here."

From Jacksonville, Fla.: "We began a series of meetings here yesterday. Fine crowds and one baptism to date. We have bright prospects and a fine body of Christians to work with. Pray for us." H. N. Rutherford.

From Forest Vale Mission, Bulawayo, S. Africa: "We are getting along nicely in the work. Have about twenty-six boys and girls learning. They will come for hundreds of miles and live on almost nothing to get to learn English, and the Bible as well, especially some of them. Not every Christian in the States will study as do some of the boys. It is a joy to teach those who want to learn. But occasionally there is one who does not want to get his lessons. Jack Mzila, one of our native teachers, from Mashonaland, who is getting some more schooling, reports four conversions since he left his country. He left two native teachers in charge." W. N. Short.

From Toronto, Canada: "We are enjoying our two-months' stay with the Bathurst St. Church. I think I am expected to hold a week's meeting in each of the three other congregations here before our return to Louisville. D. H. Jackson and R. G. Schell are really doing a wonderful work at Fern Ave. and East Toronto, respectively. I say really, because while it is customary for preachers to say this of one another, here it is true. Fern Ave. has often 75 "outsiders" at the Sunday night services. Brother Alexander Stewart's faithful work at Wychwood (while supporting himself) is *equally* worthy of mention. What an advantage those "lay-preachers" have! No tinge of professionalism, no suspicion that perhaps they are out "for the money that is in it," to discount their influence.

"Counting the solid residence sections contiguous to the city, but not within the corporate limits, Toronto is said to have a population of a million—and a cleaner, more beautiful city one could hardly wish to see. The moral tone is remarkable. Here respected women come and go alone, if need be, as late as midnight; and one cannot buy a paper on Sunday! So much for the religious training of the Scot! Our address is 591 Euclid Ave., Toronto."

W. J. Johnson writes from Amite, La.: "Good services at Oak Grove on the third Lord's day in April. Two from the Catholic church were baptized into Christ; also good services at other points. Pray that doors of usefulness may be opened to us for the proclaiming of the word, and that more laborers may be sent into our Master's vineyard."

From Yalaha, Fla.: "Brother A. C. Reader closed a two weeks' meeting here April 12. He preached in the Methodist Church house to people of many different denominations, declaring the complete way of salvation as taught in the Bible; yet in so tactful a way that none took offence. Two ladies took their stand for Jesus and were baptized. Others were almost persuaded, but were held back because there is no congregation established here, and no one to lead the work." Mrs. Lelia V. Homan.

WHAT CONSTITUTES UNITY?

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

All know that our Savior prayed for the oneness of believers and that Paul warned against divisions among them and exhorted to unity. But there is disagreement as to what constitutes that unity and as to how it is to be brought about. There are writers and speakers who maintain that the Savior's prayer is answered, that God's people are one, that denominationalism itself constitutes the oneness prayed for, one denomination standing for one portion of the truth as it does and another for another, the aggregate making up the whole of the truth.

Another class, differing from these, recognize the divided state of the so-called Christian world but maintain that the true people of God to be found as a remnant among the denominations are themselves one people and not divided and that the Savior's prayer is fulfilled in them, that He prayed not for outward, visible, uniformity but for inward, invisible, spiritual unity. There is a plausible sound to this and the theory has many exponents, who teach that it does not make any difference to what church you belong just so your heart is right.

But does not the New Testament require not only an inward, invisible, spiritual unity, but an outward, visible unity also? "Now I beseech you, brethren, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10). Speaking, of course, is something outward, and this oneness of speech, therefore, is an outward oneness. "That the world may believe" was the Savior's heart burden when He prayed for the oneness of believers. (Jno. 17:21). He was praying to the end that the world might not see believers divided. He was praying for a oneness that the world could see, that its believing on Him might not be hindered. If the Savior's prayer is fulfilled in the present state of believers, separated as they are by creeds and denominational walls into different communions, if this is the fulfillment of that prayer, then what would constitute its non-fulfillment or failure? What was our Savior praying against? To deny that division exists today, is to treat the whole matter as the "Christian Scientists" treat the question of disease or sin. We are not ready to accept the theory.

Another class recognize and deplore the divided state of christendom and seek to remedy the matter by merging the many denominations into one great federation. There are those who are devoting the whole of their energy thus to overcome the bane of divisions. The plan seems plausible on the surface, but in the light of the Word it is clearly not in God's order, no more so than was the affinity of Judah and Israel in the days of their rank idolatry. Such federations invariably bear the fruit of confusion

worse confounded. Denominationalism and interdenominationalism are both unscriptural.

Simple New Testament congregations of Christ (which are neither denominational nor interdenominational) are the only solution to the problem. "All with one accord in one place" is what we read in Acts, and again, "All that believed were together." Heb. 10:25, unless disregarded, would keep them together. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is." We "are severally members one of another." The eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of thee" nor the head thus to the feet. Much less can a member say, "I have no need of the congregation." That is to be schismatical. The twelfth chapter of First Corinthians is a scripture greatly, sadly disregarded in these days.

"But," says one, "what if the congregation is not what it ought to be?" The congregation is never what it ought to be, or what the Holy Spirit would have it. If it were so today, that is for one day, it would not be so after an increase tomorrow. We are not born full-grown, and there are always those needing to be taught if not corrected. Every congregation in the New Testament needed correction. How far can the congregation go wrong before one is justified in withdrawing himself therefrom? Not until it gets worse than Corinth was at the time Paul wrote "that there be no schism in the body," and Corinth was pretty bad. To slip out when something goes wrong, or when one's plan is not adopted, or when trespassed against, or when someone is offended in him, that is the easy way for the time being, of course, but it is to evade responsibility and will be a matter requiring attention at the judgment seat of Christ.

Corinth was pretty bad, but there was no hint of such a thing, by the Holy Spirit, as the formation of some other organization in which the wronged or the grieved or the peeved might take refuge. In these days "kindred spirits" flock together and away from those not so congenial to them. Hands beautiful are inclined to separate themselves from uncomely feet. "We have no need of you. We feel better away from you. You get on our nerves." Wonder if heaven will have to make some special provision for those of this temperament that they may withdraw apart lest their happiness be incomplete! Just such a course as this is what Paul is endeavoring to forestall in his writing the Corinthians. Charity, that kind that faileth not and which covereth, will make us tolerant of the failings of others, even of the intolerant.

Of course if Corinth had shifted its ground from that of the oneness of the body of Christ and had given recognition to some other authority than that of Christ as the living Head, if that congregation had swung around into some other religious system or had joined with other congregations in the formation of some denomination, the case had been different. God exhorts His people to come out of Babylon but He does not exhort the spiritual

of Corinth to come out of her. Their cases are different as any Bible reader can see. Let congregations under denominational control declare their independence thereof and take the ground of the New Testament assembly with its "bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1) under Christ alone as Head and His word as its only guide. If such a congregation will not do so, then let those who are the Lord's therein, if there be any, withdraw themselves and stand upon that one foundation other than which no man can lay. In congregations occupying the New Testament ground, let those who are spiritual lend themselves patiently and perseveringly to the teaching, training and correction of such as are otherwise, exercising discipline in such cases as require it, withdrawing fellowship from the incorrigible. This is the plain simple path of duty marked out for us and no one can evade it without transgression of the word and grief to the Holy Spirit. Oh Lord, help us to walk in the more excellent way, and may Thy people be one that the world may believe.

HARD TO INTERPRET.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

It is a far stretch from a babe to an instructor; what the teacher is able to impart the babe is not able to interpret. The difficulty lies not with the truth to be learned nor with the teacher but in the incapacity of the babe.

Hebrews 5:11-14 is certainly an enlightening passage on this point. The apostle had just introduced the profound subject of "the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek." In the 11th verse he states that he has many things to say. "And hard of interpretation:" not necessarily because the subject itself was so difficult but they had "become dull of hearing"—"hard of interpretation, seeing ye are become dull of hearing." They were still in need of a milk diet when by reason of time they ought to have been teachers. Their dullness of hearing had resulted in a dwarfed spirituality and in a condition of "inexperience in the word of righteousness." It is also clear that this same dullness of hearing had resulted in a spiritual flabbiness because there had been no "exercise of their senses in the matter of discerning good and evil."

This defect in hearing may be caused by many different things. Mental and spiritual laziness will produce it, and a habitual tendency to be satisfied with only what is considered plain and easy (we all like "easy" things) will result in weakening our organs of spiritual hearing. Another cause of such deafness is the development of the habit of listening only for certain things. Just the things which we like to hear and the things we have always heard. Thousands of sounds may be heard in the streets but the motorman hears only the whistle of the traffic officer or the siren's shrill sound or the clang of the bell on the car to the right or left. If we delight in hearing only certain truths which

seem to our minds to oppose the position of our religious neighbors or to substantiate our own theory, we are bound to become dull of hearing. Men whose hearts are open, whose senses are exercised to discern, will see many beautiful relations in the word of God and discover many helpful truths which the man dull of hearing will either reject entirely or will consider too hard, consequently from our self-satisfied spiritual baby minds we are likely to dismiss the whole thing as being either speculation or error. Also there are portions of the word of God, certain chapters or even whole books which are thrown aside in the scrap-heap as being too "hard of interpretation" when the reason is, that we have become dull of hearing ourselves because of our spiritual habits.

Another reason for our inability to hear is the false practice of cataloging the truth and labeling certain things "essential" and others "non-essential." Some pages in our catalogue are marked "important," others "not important." Again certain positions have been marked "settled" because certain men have placed their stamp of approval on them. The others are marked "impossible of settlement," "don't know," "let alone," etc. The ones marked "essential," "important," "settled," etc., we either like to hear or take for granted without study or investigation. The others we will not hear. This is bound to result in sectarian prejudice and in a fossilized religion.

Perhaps the greatest reason for a dull ear is our presumption that we know it all or at least know all that needs to be known or that is of any value. Should a man examine a scale from the back of a sardine under a microscope and learn all there is to be known about that scale he certainly ought not to conclude that he knows all the wonders of the mighty deep.

Should preachers of Christ be satisfied with preaching only what the church are pleased to hear or what they have always heard? Shall we dwarf our own souls and the souls of them who hear us with the presentation of the alphabet, or the multiplication table only and never learn to read, write, or spell; never see any use of learning solid measure, percentage, algebra or even geometry? Certainly the word of God is bigger than that.

The case under consideration of the Hebrews is a fine illustration. Melchizedek is without doubt a character about whom the Old Testament tells us very little. He was a king-priest and a type of Christ. His position was in some respects better than that of Abraham. He blessed Abraham and the "less is blessed of the better." (Heb. 7:7). His priesthood was a higher order than the Aaronic, for the whole Levitical priesthood who received tithes from Israel, paid tithes to Melchizedek; "through Abraham were Levi who received tithes, paid tithes for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him." (Heb. 7:9). This and very much more was said of this mighty king-priest and why? Hadn't they heard the gospel? Didn't they know all the steps necessary to becoming Christians? Didn't

they know what the plain commandments of the gospel were? They knew all their duties. Why burden their minds with this "impractical" knowledge? Ah, why? Their very devotion to Jesus Christ depended upon knowing that the Aaronic order of the priesthood had never been perfect, that only in a king-priest is their perfection of office. This teaching which was neither plain precept, nor among the so-called essentials of the gospel was vitally necessary to the preservation of their uncorrupted faith in Jesus Christ and what might have been termed "impractical" was of the highest practical value. Let "the whole counsel of God" be our motto.

INTERESTING QUERIES.

R. H. B.

ABOUT DISARMAMENT AND DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

"How will the change from human government to Divine be made? Is there any hope in the present international move for lasting peace?"

Answering the latter question first:—*No*. Our hope lies not in the hopeless prospects here below, but it comes down from above. "Our citizenship is in heaven whence also we look for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. 3:20). The nations are indeed meeting to discuss disarmament; but not because they love God and Christ any better, or because they love one another any more, than formerly. They have found out that war is a terrific loss to all concerned, and it is only intelligent self-interest to try to prevent it. Moreover the financial burden of the race of armaments has become so great as to threaten ruin. Hence the necessity of joint agreement to stop it. So the nations met in diplomatic tournament, to reach such agreement, and incidently to match wits and out-manuever one another, so as to carry away each the greatest possible advantage over the others. Such is the character of the "present move for lasting peace." But the word of God testifies that war, being the natural outworking of man's fleshly nature, will continue to the end of the age; and the reign of peace shall not be until the coming of the Prince of Peace. He is our Hope.

The change from human government to Divine does not come by gradual process but by a sudden catastrophe, as described in Rev. 19:11 to 20:6. See also Dan. 2:31-44 and 7:26, 27.

ABOUT INDIVIDUAL COMMUNION CUPS.

"Brother Boll, can you with conscience void of offence use, or fellowship the use, of individual communion sets in the observance of the Lord's Supper?"

A man's conscience should be brought under the control of the word of God. If aught is told us in God's word that would demand the use of only a single cup, then we must use just one cup—not two, or four, or forty. But if what the Lord wants is simply that we jointly participate in the bread and wine in remembrance of Him, we are left at liberty to do so in any expedi-

ent way and method. Now in regard to the bread we are specifically taught that the loaf (before it is blessed and broken) must be *one*. The oneness of the loaf has a significance. (1 Cor. 10:17). But no such restriction exists concerning the *receptacle* in which the fruit of the vine is to be passed around; and if God has not laid down a restriction we ought not to make one, either for our own consciences or for the conscience of others. We are in danger of turning cherished custom and even personal preferences into conscientious demand. That is wrong, and causes much unnecessary trouble. It may be objected that the Lord used but one cup. An example however is not in itself *restrictive*. Some folk think the communion should be taken at night, because it was originally instituted at night. Some think till yet that we should meet in an upper room; or that after supper we should, according to the example, sing a hymn and go out; and the like. All that is beside the point. Neither the time, nor the place, nor the sequel, was the thing required; but that Christ's people eat of the bread and drink of the cup in remembrance of Him. All else, unless specifically enjoined, is left open, adaptable to all circumstances. It is evident that, while the twelve could use the one cup, the vast congregations that arose at Jerusalem and Antioch would either have to use many cups or have one cup re-filled over and over; and there is no more scripture for refilling the one cup than for using several cups. And if we may use several cups the use of several more, so as to supply each individual cannot be unscriptural. Our circumstances today are such that in most places expediency demands the individual cup, and the refusal of it would become a stumbling-block to many. Let us then, for the good of all, where necessary, surrender our personal preferences, and raise no conscientious difficulties where the Lord has left us free.

ABOUT THE STATE OF THE DEAD.

"Do the scriptures anywhere teach a conscious state of being between physical death and the resurrection?"

There are some passages in the Old Testament which taken by themselves sustain the idea of the unconsciousness of the dead; and those who hold the "soul-sleeping" and "annihilation" theories of course harp on them. However, in the light of *all* the scriptures bearing on the subject, we see that those Old Testament passages speak relatively to earthly existence. It was only within the limit of human activity on the earth, that the dead have become nonentities. In the New Testament the limit of vision is enlarged; and we see the departed, good and bad, in conscious existence beyond. The present body is as a "tabernacle" put off (2 Pet. 1:13-15). In this present tabernacle we groan—not so much desiring to be *unclothed* (by which manifestly is meant the separation from the body) but rather clothed upon, endued with the permanent immortal body (as in 1 Cor. 15:51-54). Whilst we are at home in this body we are absent from the Lord—the veil of flesh hangs between us and Him; and to be ab-

sent from the body (which is the condition after death) is to be at home with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:4-8). In agreement with this is the teaching of Phil. 1:21-24. "For to me to live is Christ, and *to die is gain* But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire *to depart and be with Christ*; for it is very far better: yet *to abide in the flesh* is more needful for your sake." Nevertheless Paul very carefully points out the fact that this, the Christian's blessed exchange at death neither constitutes his hope, nor brings him to the final reward, which will not be till our Lord comes. (Phil. 3:20, 21; 2 Tim. 4:8).

Even the Old Testament shows occasionally the continued conscious existence beyond death; as in the case of Samuel (1 Sam. 28); and our Lord himself portrayed it in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16)—both of which passages are of course fiercely assailed by those who must force the scripture to their notions; but are nevertheless clear and conclusive.

MARRIAGE AND THE WOMAN MOVEMENT.

Society never made marriage; it found it: marriage is a direct act of God, based on a direct word of God. Our Lord goes behind the Law of Moses, back to the bedrock of Creation, and says,—“For this cause”—i. e., because God had made a man and a woman, and one man and one woman only—“the *twain* shall become *one flesh*: what therefore *God* hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. xix, 5.) Essentially, therefore, marriage is not a legal contract; an economic corner-stone of the State: or a union of mutual love: it is all these, but it is immeasurably deeper: *it is an act of God*—“God hath joined together”—so making the persons directly responsible to Himself; and it is God, our Lord says, who decreed the union,—“*He* which made them, *said*, the twain shall become one flesh.” God gave away the first bride,—“God brought her unto the man” (Gen. ii, 22), and so sanctified wedlock for ever.

Thus marriage is one of the primal laws of God: “be fruitful and multiply” is a command that has never been rescinded for the Gentile nations; and all assaults upon the marriage state are thus direct assaults upon Jehovah. Believers now, it is true, may, with the full approval of God, avoid the gracious but binding tyrannies of domestic union for a fuller devotion to Christ: so the Scripture says,—“It is good for a man to be as he is” (1 Cor. vii, 26): an abiding exhortation throughout the dispensation *because the reasons given for it (vv. 32-35) are abiding*; and the ‘present distress’ is thus the age-long tribulation of a pilgrim Church. But the sanctity, the general advisability (1 Cor. vii, 2, 1 Tim. v, 14, Matt. xix, 10-12), and the fundamental divineness of marriage, remain: a sanctity which has been made final by our Lord’s adoption of it as the supreme symbol of His relationship to His Church, His Bride. “LET MARRIAGE BE HAD IN HONOUR AMONG ALL.” (Heb. xiii, 4).

So from the sanctity and solemnity of marriage, thus directly Divine, our Lord reveals that, except for the one sin which is in itself a dissolution of wedlock, there can be no divorce—no separation, that is, carrying with it the right of re-marriage in the lifetime of the partner. Fornication, *in either sex*, dissolves marriage (Matt. xix. 9): for our Lord's teaching, little as modern women may think it, lies at the root of all tender chivalry and all delicate exaltation of woman, *and enforces one rule for both sexes*. But no act of parliament, no papal dispensation, no universal custom, no earthly tribunal whatever can override the law of Christ: the divorced on any ground less than fornication, if married again, will appear as adulterers and adulteresses at the bar of God. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, *committeth adultery*" (Matt. xix. 9): "if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called AN ADULTERESS" (Rom. vii. 3).

WOMAN'S SUBORDINATION.

Creation adjusted also the exact status of the woman. The priority of the husband is embedded in the creative act: a rib of Adam formed the basis of Eve, so that while he was made out of earth, she was made out of *him*: so revealing both the woman's dependence upon, and subordination to, the man, and also her perpetual claim upon him for protection and love. "The man is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. "*For*"—the reason is deeply embedded in creation—"the man is not of the woman"—*he* was not created from *her* rib—"but the woman of the man. For neither was the man created for the woman, *but the woman for the man*" (1 Cor. xi. 8). The act of creation makes exact equality of the sexes impossible for ever. "I will make him an *helpmeet* for him" (Gen. ii, 18)—a counterpart, a complement; one who, as being unlike, supplies his defects; so that all the man lacks his other self—for she was created out of him—contributes physically, intellectually, socially; and as hydrogen and oxygen blend to produce water, so man and woman blend to make the perfect marriage—God's conjoint creation for which Christ died. Exquisitely does the Apostle sum up the relationship:—"Howbeit *neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord:*" two halves of one whole, in which one is chief, they are "joint-heirs of the grace of life" (1 Pet. iii. 7).

Thus we arrive at the balanced relationship of the home. As a Christian, the wife is her husband's 'sister'; as married, she is his 'wife': as sister she has an exact equality in standing and redemption—for "there can be no male and female, for ye are all one *in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. iii. 28); as wife, she is subordinate and obedient, even as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is subject to Him. For "as the church is subject to Christ, *so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything*"; a truth which is balanced by its correlated truth,—"*husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church*" (Eph. v. 24). For subordina-

tion, woven by the Creator into the very fabric of the social order, is neither a proof nor a badge of inferiority: it is an indispensable barrier against anarchy. No social order which is but in defiance of nature and revelation—and the exact conformity of nature and revelation on sexual relationship is one of the overwhelming facts of the situation—can end in aught but wreckage and anarchy. The child is to obey the parent (Eph. vi, 1), the subject is to obey the civil ruler (Tit. iii, 1), the disciple is to obey the Church ruler (Heb. xiii, 17), the servant is to obey the master, even though an unbeliever (1 Pet. ii, 18); although 'in Christ' there is neither male nor female, parent nor child, subject nor ruler, servant nor master. In all these cases the subordinate is frequently the superior; nevertheless, for purposes of order, subordination is essential,—“Sarah obeyed,” as the Holy Ghost notes with marked approval (1 Pet. iii. 6),” *calling him lord.*” Subordination—a subordination which may win the husband (1 Pet. iii, 1)—is the part of the wife: love is the equal obligation of the husband.

Nor is marriage the only relationship which is regulated by the creative act. “I PERMIT NOT A WOMAN TO TEACH”—as wider than ‘evangelize’ or ‘preach,’ the word includes all public instruction—“*nor to have dominion over a man,*”—the second clause is vitally linked with the first—“but to be in quietness” (1 Tim. ii, 12). Women may teach women (Titus ii, 4), and children (2 Tim. iii. 15), and instruct individuals, as did the woman of Sychar (John iv, 28), Mary (John xx, 18), and Priscilla (Acts xviii, 26): *she may thus teach four-fifths of the human race*: but publicity in mixed assemblies, hitherto neither desired nor approved by the great majority of those to whom the Holy Ghost has given the magnificent title of ‘daughters of the Lord God Almighty,’ is strictly prohibited. It is now her forbidden fruit. “*For*”—the root reason is again inextricably intertwined with the creative act—“Adam was *first* formed, *then* Eve.” It is not personal disqualification, for inherent superiority in everything belongs to neither sex: but the order in which He created them has revealed God’s design for their relationship; and superiority in status lies with the man, together with natural aptitude for initiative and rule. “But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the *head* of the woman is the *man*; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. xi. 3). The headship of the Man need be no more obnoxious to the Woman than the headship of God is obnoxious to Christ: no wrong is done to either, but that order is established which is Heaven’s first law.* Nor

*For delicate chivalry and warmth of appreciation, Paul, the first of all ancient writers to declare the Christian exaltation of woman, and the spiritual equality of the sexes, remains unsurpassed. “Priscilla, unto whom not only I give thanks, but all the churches; Phoebe, a succourer of many, and of myself also; the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord; the mother of Rufus, his mother and mine; help these women, for they laboured with me in the gospel, whose names are in the book of life.” The Scriptures have ever been the magna charta of ideal womanhood.

is it with particular classes of women, such as loose Corinthians, or women in particular localities, as in Ephesus or Corinth, but with women *as women* that Paul deals; and it is "all subjection" that he commands, that is, complete subordination. "I suffer not a woman *to teach*"; "be ye *imitators of me*, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 1)—a commanded imitation, occurring in the very context of the headship of the man, the meaning of which a child cannot mistake, and the force of which a giant cannot overthrow. Very solemnly our Lord rebukes a church officer for neglecting to enforce this rule;—"I have *THIS against thee*, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel *to teach*" (Rev. ii. 20)." They alone hold the true custody of woman's honour who counsel her to obey her God.

But there is a second reason for the prohibition to teach. "For Adam was not beguiled"—that is, he fell with open eyes, and through love of his wife—"but the woman being beguiled"—being caught, being trapped, as the sole direct victim of the Tempter; Adam is nowhere said to have come into contact with the Serpent at all—"hath fallen into transgression"—and so induced the fearful entail of sin upon the race. Because of a misuse so grave God has now explicitly forbidden to the woman an initiative which He had never given her: her interpretation of Scripture, and her rejection of the Word of God, have permanently disqualified her for the more responsible and prominent functions of teaching. Adam's sin was the greater, for the prohibition of the Tree he received direct from God, while she received it only from him; and, as a gift put into his hands by God, he was responsible to control her: nevertheless her sin revealed her incapacity for initiative; and so drew from Jehovah the first verbally expressed subordination.—"Thy desire shall be to thy husband, *and he shall rule over thee*" (Gen. iii. 16).*

SATANIC CULTS.

The subtlest and deadliest sects today spring from repetitions of this primal sin. The bulk of Spiritualistic mediums are women; Theosophy, founded by Madame Blavatsky, and propagated by Mrs. Besant; Christian Science, organized throughout by Mrs. Eddy; the New Thought Church, the manufacture of Mrs. Sears:—all these are, or were, Spiritualistic mediums—*woman, again a pliant tool, is listening once more to the reappearing Serpent.* But the disability is not eternal. Presumably, in so far as the subordination sprang, not from the woman's mode of creation, but from her priority in sin, it will ultimately disappear, together with its sign—travail in childbirth—at the final obliteration of all penal consequences of sin in both sexes; but meanwhile the prohibition of public instruction abides in full dispensational force,—*as is proved by the continuance of travail in childbirth.*

*Yet the second Garden has redressed the balance: while first in the transgression, woman was also last at the Cross, and first at the Tomb.

It is not only loyalty to the Word of God, or a consciousness of perils which history has shown to be far from imaginary, which compels us, at all costs, to enforce the Scriptures; but a sweeter motive wooes and wins—"that we may present every [believer] *perfect* in Christ" (Col. i. 28), "giving honour unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel" (1 Pet. iii. 7)—a sentence which holds in it the whole soul of chivalry; and no honour is so real or effectual as clearing her pathway, by eliciting her own glad obedience, into the heart of the coming glory. For an athlete "is *not* crowned, except he have contended *lawfully*" (2 Tim. ii. 5): the regulations for women, and also for men in their sphere, will decide the issue of their coronation: woman's obedience is essential to her glory. It is lowliness, not publicity, which determines, for both sexes, degree of rank (Matt. xx. 26) in the coming Kingdom. So we arrive at the final regulation. "LET THE WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES: FOR IT IS NOT PERMITTED UNTO THEM TO SPEAK" (1 Cor. xiv. 34); a Scripture so clear, so decisive, that no one doubts what it *seems* to mean: let us ponder, therefore, the explanations advanced to prove that it does *not* mean what it *seems* to mean—namely, the absolute silence of sisters.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF WOMAN'S SPEAKING.

(1) It is said that the word here should be translated 'wives,' not 'women,' and that thus it is a rule for the married only. But the vast majority of women, as of men, *are* married: this objection, therefore, would give but little relief: the rule would still be binding on the vast majority of womankind. Moreover, if so, it means that while godly and mature matrons are enjoined to silence, girls still in their teens may rise and teach the Church: a statement which has only to be made, to be rejected.

(2) It is said that the word means 'chatter,' and refers only to thoughtless or flippant interruption. But the word is used twenty-four times in this very chapter, *and never once in the sense of 'chatter' or 'interrupt'*: it is used throughout of prophecies and inspired utterances: and once (ver. 21) of God's own utterance. The Greek word exactly corresponds to our English word 'speak,' covering all utterance, dignified or undignified. Moreover, the Holy Spirit has already said,—"*Let the women keep silence*": the injunction is thus wholly unmistakable, for it is affirmed both positively and negatively.

(3) It is said that this is a restriction of the Law of Moses, from which the Gospel has freed women. But Paul says,—"*Let them be in subjection, as also saith the law*"; that is, on this point, according to the Apostle, the Law and the Gospel are identical. Woman's ministry in synagogue and temple was wholly unknown and forbidden; though, as nothing to that effect is explicitly recorded in the Mosaic Law, *the restriction has actually advanced in definiteness under the Gospel.*

(4) It is said that the regulation was for Corinthian women, accustomed to loose habits, and educated in a lawless atmosphere. But the Epistle is addressed (i. 2) "to *all* who call upon the name of the Lord *in every place*": "let the women keep silence"; and not, in the Church at Corinth, but—"in the churches." Timothy receives identical instructions (1 Tim. ii. 12) to rule church order wherever he might be located.

(5) It is said that these are rules confined to the miraculously gifted of the Apostolic Church, and are not applicable, therefore, in our uninspired era. But is it possible that women, through whom the Holy Ghost is directly speaking, miraculously gifted, are to be silent while *uninspired* women may speak freely? The fact, *admitted by the objection*, that the *inspired* are to be silent, overwhelmingly silences the uninspired: it is obviously women *as women*, that are to be silent, whether inspired or not.

(6) It is said that Paul elsewhere (1 Cor. xi. 5) allows the woman to pray and prophesy, if covered. Obviously the gift of prophecy is for both sexes; but there is no New Testament example of a woman's *public* prayer or prophecy: Elizabeth's (Luke i. 42) and Mary's (Luke i. 46) were private. Paul in the immediate context has been regulating the use of the *prophetic* gift, and then says,—“Let the women keep silence *in the churches*”—that is, in *public* ministrations.* Even to Nature it is an act improper and unbecoming, and, in the eyes of God, a disgrace—“for it is a *shame* for a woman to speak in the church;” and that which is a shame in God's sight now, cannot be other than a shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

(7) It is said that God has set His seal of approval on woman's ministry, at least in evangelism, by granting conversions under her words. But nothing that can occur, not even conversions, can unsay what the Holy Spirit has said: only a rescinding order from the Spirit Himself, in the word of God, could alter these orders. The kindred fact that conversions can occur under an unregenerate preacher is no Divine authorization of an unconverted ministry, but merely demonstrates that the life is in the Seed, not in the hand that sows it. The Word of God is liable to convert from any mouth. Moses may strike the rock, “rebelling against the word of the Lord,” yet the waters

*Does the regulation cover public prayer also? It would seem so. This very chapter regulates prayer in the assemblies,—“If I *pray* in a tongue, my spirit *prayeth* (ver. 14): and then the Spirit says,—“Let the woman keep silence.” Is not audible prayer a breach of silence? and is it not an assumption of some degree of authority in leading an assembly to the Throne? In 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, the word for ‘men’ is man *inclusive* of woman; “God willeth that all *men* [all human beings] should be saved:” but in ver. 8 it is man as *distinct* from woman; “let the *males* pray everywhere.” So, moreover, Alford: “The English Version [A. V.], by omitting the article, has entirely obscured this passage for its English readers, not one in a hundred of whom ever dreams of a distinction of the sexes being here intended.” Even questions which are no assumption of authority, are (ver. 35) forbidden. Collective singing (Col. iii, 16) is commanded.

flow (Num. xx. 11-24)—for the Holy Spirit will flow forth to parched lips from the smitten Christ even when disobediently invoked.

(8) Finally—and this exhausts the objections known to me; objections, I may add, never advanced, so far as I am aware, by front-rank commentators)—it is said that exceptional women have been raised by God above this rule. The answer is obvious. God is sovereign, and may make what exceptions to His own rules that He chooses; *but I may not make them*. And is it certain that there have been any such exceptions in this dispensation as will stand the searchlight of the Judgment Seat of Christ? There is a Deborah in the Old Testament: there is no Deborah in the New. No female pastor, apostle, ruler, or evangelist,—no head or teacher in any church *except Jezebel* (Rev. ii. 20)—is named throughout the New Testament.

But God has not left us to human reasoning, however loyal, or to human scholarship, however careful and competent: it is most startling to observe that He has made obedience to this rule a discriminating test between Heaven and Hell, Himself assuming full and final responsibility for the decree. For the Apostle, foreseeing the strongest opposition, challenges the Church at Corinth,—‘Are you the authors and primitive fountain of the Christian Faith, so that you can initiate new rules for the Universal Church? or are you the sole depository of the Faith, so that you can override the customs of all the Churches?’ ‘What? was it *from you* that the Word of God went forth? or came it unto you *alone*?’ The universal rule, made by the Spirit for all churches, is the only rule for a local church: *a local assembly has no power to authorize its women to speak*. So, on the parallel regulation of the headship of the man, Paul says,—‘If any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, *neither the churches of God*’ (1 Cor. xi. 16) But only are they not the authors of church law, but they have forgotten *Who is*. After this rebuke to their pride in their own judgment, the Apostle, conscious of his Divine authority, deliberately lets fall a challenge of almost unexampled gravity. ‘If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or inspired [cp. 1 Cor. xii. 1], *let him acknowledge* of the things which I write unto you’—the regulations I am now making (Alford)—‘**THAT THEY ARE THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD**’: that it is not I, Paul, whose words you read, but direct requirements and commands of the Son of God. Paul suddenly disappears, and Christ looms forth: this decree is not an apostle’s judgment, or the collective wisdom of the Churches, or even the decision of all apostles and prophets: it is the personal command of the Head of the Church, and therefore is to be enforced on the consciences of all the saints with the full authority of God. It is an exceedingly impressive proof of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the universal Church that such an acknowledgment has always been made. ‘This rule,’ says Bishop Ellicott, ‘was carefully maintained in the early

Church: its infringement had a far graver import than might appear on the surface, and, as we well know, expanded afterwards into very grave evils"; and for eighteen hundred years the Church Catholic, with hardly a dissentient voice, has enforced this commandment as of the Lord.

GOD-INSPIRED OR SATAN-INSPIRED.

But the matter is graver still. *The attitude of all inspired persons on this church regulation infallibly reveals the source of their inspiration.* "If any man thinketh himself to be a *prophet* or *inspired*, LET HIM ACKNOWLEDGE"—as a test of the source of his inspiration—"that they are the commandment of the Lord." It is most remarkable that the prophets and the inspired at Corinth, in spite of the deep church disorders, did acknowledge that this commandment was from Christ; for in his Second Epistle (i., 13) Paul says,—“We write none other things unto you, than what ye read or *even acknowledge.*” There are sisters, true and devout, who now say—“The Spirit leads me to speak in public.” A spirit, perhaps; *the Spirit never*: for the Spirit cannot contradict Himself, and what He means on this subject He has already said: the Spirit will always endorse the Spirit. *No supernatural or woman movement since the Apostles has acknowledged these regulations as binding upon itself.* Montanists, Camisards, and early Quaker Prophets; Theosophists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, and the Tongues Movement—all have revealed their source (so far as they are supernatural, and so far as the supernatural in them is concerned) by maintaining that these Regulations of the Holy Ghost, for one reason or another, are not to be obeyed. It is a test whereby we can distinguish the Satan-gifted from the God-gifted: the status of woman is a fundamental barrier between Heaven and Hell.*

The Apostle closes with a word of practical counsel. Foreseeing an opposition which no reasoning or Scripture can silence, and which no authority can overawe, he says, “If any man is ignorant”—professes his inability to pronounce whether these regulations are from God or not—“*let him be ignorant.*” State the truth; obey the truth; within our sphere, enforce the truth: then, if the opposing disciple remains obdurate, be silent, and leave him to the wise, tender, and righteous judgment of his Lord.

D. M. PANTON.

*The French Revolution, in the person of Condorcet, gave birth to the Woman Movement, which later took shape in the ‘Ligue des Droit des Femmes’ in 1867, and now encircles the globe,—perhaps of all movements thus far the most symptomatic of the revolt from primal law. Theosophists largely officer the Movement; and it is the Perfect Way (p. 154), a masterpiece of Theosophic deceit claiming supernatural inspiration, which lays down this Theosophic fundamental:—“The curse will be removed, Paradise regained, and the second Sabbath of the Golden Age achieved, **only when woman is again invested with her rightful supremacy over man.**”

FOUR PARAGRAPHS ABOUT JAPAN.

O. D. BIXLER.

The Japanese people as a whole are scrupulously clean. They never go into their houses with their shoes on. The floors of their rooms are straw mattings two inches thick, covered with pretty, finely woven natural colored straw matting. On these they do not even use the clean house slippers which they use in other parts of the house. They bathe every day. The women (in the cities especially perhaps) are very precise about their clothing and appearance. Most of the women shave. In addition I must say about their bathing, that most families, rich or poor, have a bath tub. They are not particular about a "bath room," many of them setting their tubs out in the yards and bathing before everyone who chances to pass their way. In the towns and cities they have great bath houses where one may go and bathe for a cent or two. Until recently these were one-room only where the sexes bathed together, but now the government requires a partition to be built in the buildings, but at the entrance the two parts are still open. Since the fall of man in the beginning such familiarity has not been conducive to good morals and so the moral condition of Japan suffers in the end by such shamelessness. Were it in the bounds of propriety I could say more as proof of this.

The Japanese are great lovers of natural beauty, and their tastes and skill in designing have developed accordingly. Their land is to my mind one great beautiful park, with mountains, rivers, trees and flowers so wonderful that any people living among them would be affected in the same way.

The Japanese are just as religious as they are clean and artistic. They "serve their gods upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree." If one sees a very beautiful place and goes to it he finds there a shrine, altar, temple or some other evidence of worship to some of the myriad spirits which they serve. In their homes they have at least one god-shelf, and usually two or three combined in one. One of these is as worship to the spirits of their relatives and foreparents who became gods as soon as they died. On their shelf incense is burned and food offered to the spirit. This form of religion we call "Shinto" which means the worship of ancestors. This is so closely united with their national affairs that it is almost impossible to separate the two. If one be a true loyal Japanese citizen he must at some time or other during the year worship after this principle. Since the Emperor is descended from the gods and becomes a god when he does, of course, the political and religious are closely united. People from all over the Empire came to Tokyo to worship the spirit of the late Emperor when the shrine at his tomb was opened last year. Millions of people came and bowed three times uttering their prayers before it. The Imperial family were among the first. It means a great sacrifice of

ancient inherent beliefs for a man to "turn from idols to serve the living and true God." The other god-shelf is in honor of Buddha's system of religion. There is a great conglomeration of most every kind of religion too. At one time they worshipped "the great and ever to be adored God of Mid-heaven" which they still know when the name is mentioned. Would to God that they still worshipped him and strove to know him better! Of course, they were groping in darkness at that time not knowing the whole truth about Him as is revealed in His Divine Word, but how much greater the darkness now! They have now turned to believe more in the power of stone and wooden images. On a recent trip to the country we saw many images of many kinds. The two most frequently seen were the horse god and the god for women who is believed to relieve the sufferings peculiar to women. At the base of these gods were mounds of little stones each one representing a prayer showing that in these enlightened days the superstitions here remain, chiefly because we who know better are content to let them remain so, so long as it costs us nothing. On this same trip in the very same neighborhood we were met with open hearts and houses that we might preach the Truth that will make them free. To dozens of children who said they never heard the name of Jesus we told about Him simply and to perhaps hundreds and even thousands (if we count the tracts we gave out) of grown people we gave opportunity to know the God that is not worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, but will do unto His children by faith, exceedingly abundantly above all that they can ask or think.

The Japanese people are troubled even now by the missionaries who come to preach to them the Gospel of the True God. They cannot understand why if God be one that His followers can be divided into so many different sects and denominations. Ah, we ourselves, cannot understand it, let alone trying to explain it. Its high time we drop such ungodly doings and unite on God's Word as our sufficient guide and drop the party names and practices. And if it would be helpful for Japan why not for America? Yea, the world as well. (1 Cor. 1:11-17.)

GOD REVEALED.

W. J. JOHNSON.

In nature the love of God is indelibly stamped. The wonderful and beautiful things about us testify that He is ever mindful of our happiness. All things are arranged and designed for our benefit and we are endowed with wisdom and knowledge to utilize them profitably. The sunshine and the rains, which cheer and refresh the earth; the mountains, with their rich treasures and beautiful scenery, that break the monotony of life and lift high our aspiration; the fertile plains, with their many products; the rivers and the seas, which are natural highways for travel and transportation; all these plainly present to us the finger-

prints of a wise, wonderful and loving Creator. Even as one of His prophets, the sweet singer of Israel wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language; their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."—(Psalms 19:1-4).

"O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory upon the heavens! When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?"

From nature we have learned many important and valuable lessons. From her we have sought to learn of our origin and destiny, as well as the beginning and ending of all things, and we have obtained an unsatisfactory and limited answer.

Now as we have been diligent students of nature and have listened, attentively, to her instruction without satisfying our hunger and thirst for wisdom and knowledge; it behooves us to give all diligence in receiving the word of Him who created nature and gave laws to govern her in her workings. For concerning the things about which she is silent, He speaks with authority.

In His word we find, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and the order of the creation, which we have also learned from nature. It is He who tells that the earth when it fell from His plastic hand was good, that all things were free from the blight of decay and death, that He made, from the dust of the earth, man in His own image, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul, that He prepared in Eden a garden and placed man therein, with authority "to rule over the earth and the cattle, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; birds of the air and the fishes of the sea"; and that Satan, through guile, succeeded in taking from him his dominion and in bringing him into captivity.

Thus, the divine record of the beginning of man's earthly career in a state of glory and perfect happiness shows a decline in his course, instead of an evolution. For, in spite of his many efforts to improve his environment, so that perfect happiness in this life may be obtained, his condition is deplorable. Misery and woe befall him on every hand; sickness and death pierce his heart with sorrow; perils distress him; contentions and strifes disturb him. He is unhappy, miserable and wretched. The nearest approach he makes toward the goal that he seeks here, is attained through the subjection of himself to divine instruction, which points to the next age and invites, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

These things which mar our happiness, bear the foot-prints of an intruder, Satan, who is ever seeking to gain a victory over God and to keep us in captivity. They manifest the justice of God in pouring out His wrath on the transgressors, and remind us from whence we have fallen and of the character of our captor, the Deceiver, who through deception, caused our alienation from God. They foreshadow the great punishment that awaits the evil-doer who, in the light of God's mercy and love to save and bless is ungrateful, and scoffs at His word.

God's revelations to, and His dealings with, us set forth principles and reveal a character that surpass anything that man in his wisdom and power can create. The perennial freshness and refining influence of His word, the Bible, cannot be denied. Even those who deny its authority admit its superiority over the literary productions of men.

"ON EVERY HIGH MOUNTAIN."

The other day, Herman Fox and I with our wives walked up the long winding road which leads to a diminutive village on a mountain top not far from Karuizawa and visited the largest and finest spring of cool, crystal water I have ever seen. It arises in a stone-walled basin about twelve feet square and two or three feet deep, boiling up the sand and small rock in one corner in an interesting way. Immediately it flows into a larger reservoir from which it proceeds, breaking into two good sized streams. Though there are only a few houses on the hill and no blacksmith shop, grocery, dry goods store or school-house, one can look up a flight of stone steps to the entrance of the temple compound where a number of buildings have arisen to them which be no gods. Along the road as we went up where reminders of the heathen worship in *torii* and shrines by the wayside. This tendency to put places of worship on the elevations reminds me of "Upon every high mountain and under every green tree."

DON CARLOS JANES.

THE APPEAL FOR RUSSIA.

The response to the appeal for Russia has been as follows:

Through Portland Avenue Church	\$97.00
D. D. B., Louisville	10.00
J. D. F., Elkhart, Tex.	1.50
Church, Cross Plains, Tenn.	8.00
Miss M. E., Boston, Mass.	5.00
Mrs. H. R. S., Kentuckytown, Tex.	1.00
T. N. P., Kentuckytown, Tex.	5.00
Mrs. W. P. M., Rockland, Mass.	3.00

Total, April 18, 1922. \$130.50

It is not a great amount, but it represents good fruit, borne in faith, hope, and love, for His Name's sake for the relief of spiritual and physical needs of the afflicted people of Russia.

FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MAY.

Lesson 6.

May 7, 1922.

ISAIAH'S IDEAL FOR A WORLD AT STRIFE.

Golden Text: Come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah.—Isa. 2:5.
Lesson Text: Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-9. (Read Notes).

2 And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. 4 And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isa. 11:1. And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. 2 And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; 4 but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins. 6 And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. 9 They shall not

Verse 2. (In verse 1 we learn of whom and to whom Isaiah spoke). What was Jehovah's house in Isaiah's time? What was "the mountain of Jehovah's house"? (Mic. 3:12; Zech. 8:3; Ps. 48:1, 2). To what eminence would it be raised in the latter days? Who would flow to it, as it were, in constant streams? (Isa. 11:10).

Verse 3. What shall many peoples say one to another? For what will they want to go there? (Comp. 1 Kings 10:24). What is it their mind to do? From what center will the law and word of Jehovah go forth? What has gone forth from Jerusalem? Luke 24:47. Was that the thing prophesied here? (Notes.)

Verse 4. Who will "judge between the nations"? Where will that Seat of International Justice be located? (v. 3.) From what place will the decrees go forth? (v. 3). What will be the effect of the ruling of its great Judge? What will become of all Militarism? (Isa. 9:5, 6).

Isa. 11:1. Who is Jesse? (Matt. 1:6). Who the "shoot" that is to come forth out of Jesse's stock? (Jer. 23:5).

Verse 2. What will be His anointing, and His equipment for the task of universal rule? (Isa. 61:1-3; Acts 10:37). Were these different spirits, or different characters of the One Spirit? (Mark the three pairs of attributes of the Spirit).

Verse 3. In what will this Spirit-anointed Messiah take His delight? What do we know of "the fear of Jehovah"? (Ps. 19:9; Prov. 1:7; 8:13). On what means of information are all earthly judges dependent? Will this great Ruler be dependent on the same?

Verse 4. What will be notable of His judgments? (Ps. 72:11, 12). What will He do to the rebellious and the evil-doers? What special Wicked one will He slay with the breath of His mouth? (2 Thess. 2:8).

Verse 5. With what will He gird Himself?

Verses 6-9. What will be the outcome of this righteous rule? Is this meant

hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.

actually or figuratively? If figurative, what does it mean? Is there any indication that it is meant literally? (Rom. 8:19-23; Acts 3:20, 21.) To what spiritual fact will this blessed result be due all the earth over? How far will that "holy mountain" extend?

NOTES ON LESSON 6.

THE TITLE OF THIS LESSON.

Is entirely misleading. This is nobody's "Ideal" of anything; it is an inspired prophecy; not a dream utopia created in man's imagination, but a Divine prediction, as absolutely sure, and as certain of exact and accurate fulfilment, as God's word always is. "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21). "No word from God shall be void of power." (Luke 1:37). "Isaiah's prophecy of God's purpose" (regarding the government of the earth) would have been correct. The fair vision set before us in this lesson will be realized when God's king, the "Prince of Peace," shall assert His authority and power, and step upon the scene to assume the actual control and government of the earth. (Rev. 11:15).

ON THE FULFILMENT OF ISA. 2:2-4.

It is believed by some that Isa. 2:2-4 was fulfilled in the establishment of the church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. "Jehovah's house" is taken to be the church (1 Tim. 3:15). The "mountain" is regarded as symbolical of a government, or kingdom. "All nations" were represented on the day when this new spiritual kingdom was established in Jerusalem (Acts 2:9, 10). And God taught them His word and law. The ultimate effect of the gospel which that day began to go forth from Jerusalem unto all nations, it is asserted, will be the cessation of all wars unto the ends of the earth. Such is a common interpretation of this prophecy. It will not bear close examination. In only one point does it touch Pentecost: namely in the fact that then and after the word of God began to go out from Jerusalem. In every other point there is no agreement between the prophecy and the alleged fulfilment, but only contrast. That by the mountain of Jehovah's house, the temple-mount at Jerusalem is meant is manifest from the context. In Micah 4:1-3 where the same prophecy recurs it is the "mountain of the house" which before had been destroyed and devastated on account of Israel's sins (Mic. 3:12) that is "established" (firmly settled and fixed) and "exalted" as the world's central throne of justice and government. It is not only said that the word goes out from Jerusalem, but the nations will come to Jerusalem in continual stream from the ends of the earth, for their guidance and adjustment of their difficulties and disputes. The One who sits there will arbitrate their matters for them, and for His counsel they come from afar. The "nations" of Acts 2 were not nations at all, but devout Jews who lived in dispersion in the various countries named, and had come to Jerusalem to worship. (Acts 2:5). The present age will not end in harmony and peace at all, but in rebellion, bloodshed, wickedness, and war. With the exception then that the gospel of Christ proceeded from Jerusalem, this prophecy has no relation to the day of Pentecost or to the church, but to the future glory of Judah and Jerusalem, as the prophet declares. (Isa. 2:1; Jer. 3:17).

THE PRACTICAL PURPOSE OF THE PROPHECY.

No revelation of scripture is given merely for the knowing or to satisfy curiosity as to the future. There is always a practical purpose back of it. All scripture (prophecy no exception) is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, completely furnished unto every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16). Coming to Israel in a day of decline and spiritual darkness, these prophecies reminded them of the nation's high calling and destiny. It encouraged the faint-hearted, revealing the sure final

victory of God. It shamed the careless. It warned the disobedient. (Isa. 2:5). It inspired the faithful. A man must needs be blind who cannot see the practical power of motive and inspiration in God's unfulfilled prophecies.

We also "do well to take heed" to this prophetic word (2 Pet. 1:19). Israel's great Messiah, their King, and Ruler of all Nations, is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In His high rule and exaltation the church, His Bride, has supreme share with Him. And the humblest service we render to His Name today will count unto that Day of Glory.

TEACHING POINTS.

1. The Title of this Lesson: why wrong.
2. The Glorious Destiny of the Mountain of the House of Jehovah.
3. Universal Peace: how and by whom brought about.
4. In what respect Isa. 2:2-4 was fulfilled on Pentecost.
6. The great Son of Jesse; in what ways the Spirit endues Him. Consider how this would fit Him for rule.
7. The character and issue of His rule.
8. The blessing of even the lower creation.
9. The spiritual power of "the knowledge of Jehovah."

SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MAY.

Lesson 7.

May 14, 1922.

HEZEKIAH LEADS HIS PEOPLE BACK TO GOD.

Golden Text: God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.—2 Chron. 30:9.

Lesson Text: 2 Chron. 30:1-9, 13.

1. And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. 2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the assembly in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. 3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. 4 And the thing was right in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly. 5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem: for they had not kept it in great numbers in such sort as it is written. 6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may return to the remnant that are escap-

Read Notes on Hezekiah.

Verses 1-4: What did King Hezekiah undertake to do? Does it appear that the people had been accustomed to keeping the Passover? (v. 5). In what month was the regular Passover to be kept? (Exod. 12:2-6). What right had Hezekiah to keep it on the second month? (Numb. 9:10, 11). For what two reasons was it necessary to keep it on the second month?

Verse 5. Did Hezekiah's dominion extend from Beersheba to Dan (that is, over all the tribes of Israel)? (1 Kings 11:31, 32). But was God's ordinance of the Passover for all Israel?

Verse 6. What was Hezekiah's message and appeal to all the tribes? Had they already suffered at the hands of Assyria? (What happened to the ten-tribe kingdom, about the 7th year of Hezekiah's reign? 2 Kings 18:9-12).

Verse 7. Is the influence of one's parentage and surroundings very strong? But do people necessarily have to be like their fathers and their brethren? What should they have learned from the fate of their relatives?

Verse 8. What was their only chance of escaping a like fate? What would God do if they returned unto Him

ed of you out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. 7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, who trespassed against Jehovah, the God of their fathers, so that he gave them up to desolation, as ye see. 8 Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves unto Jehovah, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever, and serve Jehovah your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. 9 For if ye turn again unto Jehovah, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that led them captive, and shall come again into this land: for Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him. 13 And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great assembly.

and obeyed His will? (See Notes on how those of the ten tribes received Hezekiah's message).

Verse 13. What was the result of Hezekiah's proclamation? (Comp. v. 26).

NOTES ON LESSON 7.

HEZEKIAH, THE GREAT, GOOD KING.

Hezekiah, than whom there was no better, was the son of Ahaz, the most faithless, of the kings of Judah; who was the son and successor of Jotham, the son of Uzziah of whom we learned in a former lesson.

Of Hezekiah we are told that "he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah; according to all that David his father had done;" and, "he trusted in Jehovah, the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him. For he clave to Jehovah; he departed not from following him, but kept his commandments which Jehovah commanded Moses. And Jehovah was with him; whithersoever he went forth he prospered." (2 Kings 18:5-7).

He let no time be lost: at once upon his accession to the throne he took hold to restore the worship and service of God: "In the first year of his reign, in the first month," he "opened the doors of the house of Jehovah and repaired them." (2 Chron. 29:3). For during the reign of his wicked father, Ahaz, the house of Jehovah was closed and allowed to decay. No man had a better right than Hezekiah to appeal to the people that they should not be like their fathers!

THE ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY.

It was during the reign of Hezekiah in Judah, that the northern kingdom, the "kingdom of Israel" fell before the Assyrian and was carried away into captivity. The events of the present lesson came before that great calamity befell Israel. The kingdom of Israel had already suffered much from Assyria (as the lesson shows) and what was left was but a remnant; but had they hearkened to Hezekiah's call they might have been spared the great final stroke. But instead when Hezekiah's messengers came, "they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them." (2 Chron. 30:10). This is the sign of certain judgment—the judicial hardening of the heart, which is God's curse. (Lam. 3:65). Not long after was the captivity.

TEACHING POINTS.

1. The Character of Hezekiah. His interest in the things of God.
2. The Passover: what it was. (Exod. 12). Hezekiah's special concern in it.
3. Hezekiah's proclamation to all Israel. His right to tell them not to be like their fathers. (See Notes.)
4. The pull of evil heredity and environment: our obligation to overcome it.
5. The hardness of heart among the northern tribes. (See Notes). A sign of swift and sure destruction. (Comp. 2 Chron. 25:16, 20).
6. The result of Hezekiah's call and proclamation. (See also 2 Chron. 30:26).
7. Hezekiah's blessedness and prosperity in the light of Ps. 1.

THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MAY.

Lesson 8.

May 21, 1922.

HILKIAH'S GREAT DISCOVERY.

Golden Text: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
And light unto my path.—P's. 119:105.

Lesson Text: 2 Chron. 34:14-16, 29-32.

14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jehovah given by Moses. 15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and moreover brought back word to the king, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they are doing. 29 Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30 And the king went up to the house of Jehovah, and all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, both great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of Jehovah. 31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. 32 And he caused all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

Verse 14. When was that? What money? See Notes. What did Hilkiah find? Where did he find it? See Deut. 31:24-21. Does that mean that the Book had been lost? If God's commandment (Deut. 31:9) had been obeyed, could the Book have been lost? If the kings had done what God ordered (Deut. 17:18-20) could the Book have been lost sight of? Was it a great loss? (Amos 8:11-13). Verses 15, 16. Who was Shaphan? What did Shaphan do with the Book? Who was king? What sort of king was he? What was it the king had committed to his servants? (See Notes).

Let the teacher go on with the sequel of this incident, verses 17-28.

Verse 29. When did the king do this? Verses 30, 31. What was the first thing he did, after the people were gathered at the Temple? Would it have been right to have kept this book for his own private benefit? What did Jonah do after that? What was the pledge he made?

Verse 32. What demand did the king make of the people? Did they comply?

NOTES ON LESSON 8.

THE TIME AND SITUATION.

Last lesson was about Hezekiah. His son, Manasseh, who reigned 55 years, began his career exceptionally wicked, but like the Prodigal Son, came to himself in the extremity of his distress, repented and returned to the Lord. Amon, his son, reigned but three evil years, and was succeeded by the king of the present lesson, Josiah, one of the best and truest kings Judah ever had, and the last good king.

From early youth Josiah began to seek after the God of David his father, and destroyed the "high places," the Baalim and Asherim, the sun-images and graven idols, even in the (now desolated) cities of the Northern kingdom. At the age of eighteen Josiah, having cleansed the land, set himself to repair the House of God, which the wicked kings before him had destroyed. (v. 11).

It was on this occasion, when the money for the repairs was brought into the temple, that Hilkiah found the Book. Moses had ordered it put by the ark of the covenant "for a witness against Israel." Deut. 31:26.

THE BOOK LOST AND FOUND.

The finding of the Book created a great stir—as the discovery of God's word always does. Shaphan, the secretary, carried it to the king and read

out of it. "And it came to pass when the king had heard the words of the law that he rent his clothes"; and he sent a delegation to inquire for him at the mouth of Huldah the prophetess what Jehovah had to say concerning their disobedience to this law. He surmised that great must be the wrath of God against them all because of the long-continued and open transgression of Israel to the law of their God. He was not mistaken. The answering message from God was fearful indeed. But to the king himself the Lord sent word that because his heart was tender, and he humbled himself before God when he heard the words of that book, and rent his robe and wept before the Lord, He had heard him; and would not let Josiah see the disaster in his lifetime.

Here was a man whose heart was tender toward God's word. God always appreciates that. "Today if ye shall hear his voice harden not your hearts."

After covenanting to obey God's whole will and law, Josiah instituted more reforms, even more thoroughgoing than his first. (2 Kings 23:4-27). He called the people together to the passover, and none of the former celebrations of the passover since the days of Samuel equalled in fervor, earnestness, and universal observance this great passover of Josiah's. (2 Chron. 35:18).

TEACHING POINTS.

1. The Lost Bible. Consider what blessing comes to us through the Bible; and by that measure how great is the calamity of being without it. Consider Amos 8:11-13. Why do we have such great need of the word of God?
2. How the Bible is lost to men today. Unbelief, "Destructive Criticism," mere neglect and indifference. What is the effect of such a loss?
3. Josiah's tender heart. Consider Isa. 66:2; Heb. 3:15; and what God said about it. (2 Chron. 34:27). The attitude we take toward the word of God when it comes to us, determines God's attitude toward us.
4. The necessity of handing out the word of God on to others.
5. The Golden Text. Also Ps. 1, and Ps. 19:7-12.

FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MAY.

Lesson 9.

May 28, 1922.

JEREMIAH SPEAKS BOLDLY FOR GOD.

Golden Text: Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah.—Jer. 26:13.

Lesson Text: Jer. 26:8-16.

8 And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. 9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people were gathered unto Jeremiah in the house of Jehovah. 10 And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house unto the house of Jehovah; and they sat in the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's house. 11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, say-

Verse 8. Who was Jeremiah? Who had commanded him to speak? For what purpose did God want him to make this speech? (Jer. 26:2, 3). How carefully and faithfully did Jeremiah have to deliver it? (v. 2, 3). How did the people propose to reward him?

(On the contents of Jeremiah's message, see Notes).

Verse 9. Why had he prophesied so? Did his adversaries appear to realize that Jeremiah spoke by God's orders? Was it kind or unkind of God to send them that word? If they had killed Jeremiah, would it have helped the matter?

Verses 10, 11. Who came when they heard of the mob gathering? Who brought accusation against Jeremiah to the princes? What was the

ing, This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears. 12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. 13 Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. 14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in your eyes. 15 Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth Jehovah hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. 16 Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God.

charge? Of what sentence did they deem him worthy?

Verses 12-15. Jeremiah's Defense. Was it plain, simple, straightforward? Who had commissioned him to speak those words? (Note Jer. 1:9). Did Jeremiah seem to care much what they did to him? But what was he greatly concerned about? What depended on their repentance and obedience? What, in case they hearkened, would Jehovah do? What would be the result if they put Jeremiah to death?

Verse 16. How did the princes decide? Do men of the world often judge more kindly and fairly than ecclesiastics and corrupt religionists? (On the sequel see the Notes).

NOTES ON LESSON 9.

THE WORK OF JEREMIAH.

Jeremiah prophesied in the declining days of Judah's kingdom, unto and beyond the Captivity. He was a man of tender heart, and shrinking disposition, but absolutely firm and faithful to his God-appointed task; so that he has fitly been called "the prophet of the bleeding heart and the iron hand!"

It was a hard, hopeless, thankless task this servant of God had to fulfill; and, from man's viewpoint, altogether unsuccessful. They did not hearken to him. Every appeal failed; every word of love or warning fell upon deaf ears; until at last the stroke fell, and amid terrible circumstances Judah was carried away captive.

THE MESSAGE IN THE TEMPLE-COURT.

In the Temple-Court, where a large and representative assembly of worshippers gathered, God had Jeremiah to speak this message. (Jer. 26:1-6). It represented one of God's last efforts to bring Israel to repentance. In order that repentance might be produced in the hearts of the hearers, Jeremiah must deliver the message carefully, faithfully, completely. "Diminish not a word," God charged him, "it may be they will hearken and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings." Was God anxious to let judgment befall them, even though they abundantly deserved it? No. 2 Pet. 3:9. Was He very desirous that they should repent? (Ezek. 33:11). What only could bring them to repentance? Repentance, then, comes through the preaching of God's word. But it must be preached fully and faithfully, in the right spirit, with love and great earnestness. Too often a part of God's word is left off. When we fail to tell men of the certainty of judgment, of the doom of the lost, of their own sinfulness and lost condition, the gospel hook lacks the barb, and will catch no fish. We must preach the whole counsel of God if we would be clear from the blood of all men. (Acts 20:26, 27). The content of the message was not large. It is not the length of the sermon, but the power of the truth that tells.

THE SEQUEL.

One of the elders of the land called attention to the fact that in Hezekiah's days a prophet (the prophet Micah) had uttered a similar message against Jerusalem (Mic. 3:12) and King Hezekiah, instead of putting Micah to death, humbled himself, and the evil was averted then.