

WORD AND WORK

IS IT PRAYER?

I often say my prayers
But do I ever pray?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the words I say?

I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone.

For words without the heart
The Lord will never hear;
Nor will He to those lips attend
Whose prayers are not sincere.

Lord teach me what I want,
And teach me how to pray;
Nor let me ask Thee for Thy grace
Not feeling what I say.

—*Selected.*

WORDS IN SEASON.

R. H. B.

MOTT'S APPEAL FOR PRAYER.

Following we reprint an extract (taken from the 'Christian Worker's Magazine') from an address by John R. Mott. The italics are ours. This appeal for prayer which gives prayer its rightful place ahead of all else, is worthy of our highest attention at any rate, but coming from such a source it is indeed very remarkable and significant. If Mr. Mott were a pious recluse and mystic we might not perhaps take his view so seriously. But Mr. Mott is a man of action, in touch with and in actual leadership of, a multitude of religious and benevolent activities, and living a very intense life. When from such a source comes such an utterance, surely it is a signal to Christians of all walks of life to enter into the privilege and obligation of their priesthood in these times of crying need. Whatever Mr. Mott's religious affiliations and views, and however we may differ with him in other matters, these timely words of his are pure and precious truth.

"THE SUMMONS OF THE HOUR."

JOHN R. MOTT.

The living God is the source of triumphant spiritual love and energy. History and experience show that He manifests Himself with loving power in answer to the prayers of His children who call upon Him with pure hearts and in a spirit of faith and true humanity.

The situation now occasioned by the great war presents the largest and most insistent call to intercession which has ever come to the Christian people of the world. The highest office of friendship is to help our friends in the deepest things of life, and the deepest things of life are those which have to do with preserving a right relation between man and God and between man and man.

Among the different ways of helping in the present world crisis, there is none which will compare in vital importance with that of wielding the force of prayer. More important than the most earnest thinking upon a problem, more important than a personal interview to influence an individual, more important than addressing and swaying an audience—far more important than these and all other forms of activity is the act of coming into vital communion with God. Those who spend enough time in actual communion with God to become really conscious of their absolute dependence on Him, shall change the mere energy of the flesh for the power of God.

There is need of solitude in this age of so many organizations. *There is no danger that men will spend too much time alone with God.* When a man says that he obtains more help from social than from secret prayer, he is in spiritual peril.

Each person should have regular, stated seasons for private prayer. Each one must decide for himself the number and the distribution of the times he will give to these spiritual exercises. It would seem, however, that all might agree upon the importance of having a regular prayer season three times a day. It is indeed true that he that saveth his time from prayer shall lose it. And he that loseth his time for communion with God shall find it again in added blessing and power and fruitfulness.

* * * * *

We are in the greatest need of help in what I believe in my inmost soul is *the most important thing, next to prayer itself, that we ever have to do, and that is the enlisting of men in the exercise of real prayer.* In some way we must get men and women who actually believe in the mountain-moving power of prayer to devote themselves to special intercession.

It is encouraging that we are living in a time when there are many calls to prayer, but this very fact carries with it the subtle

danger that many of these appeals lose their force and are not conscientiously heeded. Moreover, men are living tremendously busy and intense lives nowadays, and it is very difficult to get them to make place for anything additional. Whatever can be done, therefore, to help to enlist even a few men and women who will, with sincerity and earnestness, join us in intercession will prove with God's assured blessing to be the greatest single service any of us can render.

THE ANSWER TO JEALOUSY.

No more final answer could have been given to the temptation of jealousy than John the Baptist's answer when his disciples came to him and said, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth and all men come to him." In that speech lay a sting to one who was open to it. Jealousy is in the flesh; and no class of men are more liable to its suggestion than public workers. What would John say to this? Would he retract the witness he had borne to the Man who was now encroaching upon his province and drawing away his following? Would he make a disparaging remark? Or perhaps a silent knowing gesture which would not implicate him, but would count against the rival? John was immeasurably above all that. His eye was upon God, not upon man. His life was to him a plan of God, designed and ordered. And the God in whom John believed was over all, controlling every man's career in His providence and by the counsel of His will. So he gave his disciples an answer of faith, which like a clear sun-ray drove away the low mist of carnal ambition and jealousy; "A man can receive nothing except it have been given him from heaven." (John 3:27). No man can have *real power* (the counterfeit need not be reckoned with) or high place, except it be given him from God. Not John, nor Jesus. If God sets up a man and gives him a work and a province, he is set up, and no man can pull him down, whatever they may do; and when God puts a man down he cannot break into power despite of it. Instead of enviously or apprehensively marking the growing influence and prestige of another, let me look to God. While no man can receive anything except it be given him from God, a man may not get everything that is coming to him if he fails to trust in God and to bestir himself—as Israel failed to take possession of all the Land, though God had given it to them. Let me be ambitious only to please God. "For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor yet from the south, cometh lifting up; but God is the judge: He putteth down one and lifteth up another." (Ps. 75:6, 7). To Him we must apply. We can lose nothing by lovingly helping every other man forward; we can gain nothing by jealousy and detraction. The Father will appoint us our place and give us our work and we shall be happy therein.

HOLDING FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

It is a solemn charge which Paul committed to his son Timothy, and well worth for us His people to consider daily. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith, have made shipwreck" (1 Tim. 1:9). The charge is "holding faith and a good conscience." Some put a good conscience away and as a result make shipwreck concerning faith. The faith is sound doctrine; the gospel of grace; the truth of Christianity. A good conscience must be maintained in order to hold that faith in sincerity and truth. Daily self-judgment, even as to the smallest things, is absolutely necessary to keep the believer from the dangerous rocks on which his faith may be wrecked. It may be a very little sin that is allowed and not confessed and put away; but this unjudged sin becomes the starting point of something worse, and may lead to terrible results. If a good conscience is put away, the believer begins to drift.

"To be in communion with God, the conscience must be good, must be pure; and if we are not in communion with God, we cannot have the strength that would maintain us in the faith, that would enable us to persevere in the profession of the truth, as God has given it to us. Satan then has a hold upon us, and if the intellect of one in this state is active, he falls into heresy. The loss of a good conscience opens the door to Satan, because it deprives us of communion with God; and the active mind under Satan's influence invents ideas instead of confessing the truth of God."

In this we find an explanation why men become apostates. They held the faith once and have given up that faith. Error does not begin with the head, but with the heart. Some sin was cherished; a secret sin had control. Self-judgment was not exercised; no confession made. Having no good conscience there was no more real communion with God and in due time came the outward evidence of it all—shipwreck concerning faith.—*Our Hope.*

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

J. N. GARDNER.

In studying the Bible, first impressions are of great value. We read a passage for the first time and it seems that such and such is the meaning. There is a great possibility that this is indeed the meaning. It is not necessary to explain that I am not discouraging earnest and continued study of all parts of the Bible. I am simply trying to discourage an evil which sometimes arises. There is often a tendency to make passages of Scripture as difficult as possible. Some seem to take pleasure in making extraordinary explanations of very simple Scriptures. Of course we ought to observe closely all that a passage teaches,

but we ought always to take it at its most simple and obvious meaning unless there are strong reasons for doing otherwise. I shall try to illustrate what I mean.

On the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah talked with Christ. The first time I read that, I thought the man who talked with Christ was Elijah himself, the very man who went to heaven in a chariot of fire. I have not seen sufficient reasons for changing. The idea is sometimes advanced that the Elijah of the Mount of Transfiguration was John the Baptist. I think this illustrates the tendency to mystify plain passages of Scripture. There is nothing in the language describing the event which should lead one to think Elijah was anyone different from Elijah himself. And the fact that the disciples mentioned Elijah after they had gone down from the mountain, confirms that view.

Let us notice another example. Call to mind the selection of Matthias, as recorded in the first chapter of Acts. When one reads that account for the first time he naturally gets the idea that Matthias was indeed the lawful successor of Judas. As that is the plainest and simplest explanation we ought to accept it in the absence of unmistakable proof to the contrary. Yet I heard one of the ablest and best known preachers known to me express the opinion that the action of the Apostles was unauthorized and that Paul was the legitimate successor of Judas. This opinion is not only unnecessary, but it establishes a dangerous precedent in interpreting Scripture.

A good while ago, when I first read the twentieth chapter of Revelations, the impression created upon my mind was that there were two resurrections and that the first was as literal as the second. I still hold to that view. I am perfectly willing to change, if I can become convinced that that view is untenable; but I have not yet found sufficient reason for changing. I have read all of the Bible a number of times, but I have not found a single passage which contradicts those impressions. Until I do, I shall hold to them.

I think these things are sufficient to illustrate what I mean. Even when a passage of Scripture is as plain as language can make it, there will be some who will ask what it means. When a man asks what a statement means, after it has already been reduced to its simplest form, it looks a little like he wishes that statement obscured. And sometimes a preacher, fearing lest his reputation for being a profound Bible student should suffer, will spend a great deal of time explaining a portion of Scripture which is already as plain as it can be. We ought to have a care lest we muddy the clear water of God's truth

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

Entered at Louisville, Ky., Post Office as Second Class Matter.

R. H. BOLL, Editor-in-chief.

Co-editors: Stanford Chambers, H. L. Olmstead, E. L. Jorgenson

Subscription. Seventy-five Cents a Year
In Clubs of Four or More Fifty Cents Each
Single Copies. Ten Cents

VOL. XII.

FEBRUARY, 1918.

No. 2.

LIMITED SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER.

Until March first, in order to roll up a good list of new names during the winter months while the people have time to read, we make the following special offer. For one dollar, cash with order, we will send *Word and Work* a full year to any new subscriber, and give the sender choice of one of these books:

Lessons on Hebrews, by R. H. Boll. A dollar volume with expository and devotional notes covering Hebrews, by the Editor of *Word and Work*.

Pilgrim's Progress.—The beautiful Revell Edition of this ever-helpful work.

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NEWS AND NOTES.

Those who use the Lesson helps in the back of WORD AND WORK will notice the absence of the lesson for the first Lord's day in March. Our intention is to issue the March Magazine in time to reach readers with this lesson.

We can still start the next fifteen or twenty new subscribers with the January issue, supplying February also, if they desire. These will go to the first who call for them, and will give new readers the entire Isaiah Course which began with January.

Don Carlos Janes is on a lecture trip through the South. On account of the heavy snow in Louisville when he left, three men had to carry his trunk a half mile to the car line. This is getting off under difficulties.

We hope those who have ordered the 1917 Bound Volume will await its delivery patiently. The five-day closing order delayed the bindery. Who else wants one of these volumes at \$1.00 each?

R. C. White is conducting meetings in Florida this winter. He reports the churches weak and the field needy.

For a Bible bargain, good until February 15, read the inside front cover of our January issue.

From John E. Dunn, Camp Sevier, Greenville, S. C.: "This is the greatest place to do good by far I ever saw. I need to be a hundred men instead of one."

The little church at Gilstrap, Ky., is in immediate need of financial help, so writes Bro. W. L. Warren. The need is for meeting-house purposes.

Have you ordered your copy of R. H. Boll's new book, Truth and Grace? One dollar postpaid. Agents wanted.

To meet the demand for more 1916 Bound Volumes than we could supply, who will send in clean copies of the July and September issues of that year? Also we should be obliged for as many as ten copies of September, 1917.

From G. W. Kerr, Sherman, Texas: "The church here is doing fine. Brother L. S. White is doing splendid work."

One brother renewed his subscription for eight years since last issue; suppose you renew for *one* year—if your time is out.

"My work with the church at Utica, Ky., closed Dec. 23. I have worked with these brethren nearly two years, and the Lord has blessed my efforts. I have never met better people. Their sole aim is to please God. Leonard Daugherty, of Louisville, Ky., will preach for them this year. I began the new year with the church at Fairmount, Ky. We will make an effort to strengthen the work in Washington, Anderson and Nelson counties this year."—R. A. Craig.

Did you read D. M. Panton's great article on "Church Amusements" in the January Word and Work? We have printed two thousand in tract form, and they are ready for delivery. Two for 5c, 25 for 50c, 100 for \$1.

THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

NAMES. Salem, Jebus, Jebu-Salem, Jerusalem, City of David, City of The Great King. By the Gentile nations: Hierosolyma, Ariel, Solima, Colonia Aelia Capitolina, Curumobarech, Leucost. By the Arabs: Perfection of Beauty, Princess of the Provinces. By all Christians and Jews: The City of God and The Holy City.

SITUATION. Near the summit of a broad range of mountains, 35 miles east from Joppa on the Mediterranean Sea, 18 miles west of the southern end of the Dead Sea and 22 miles west of the Jordan River. It is 2500 feet above the level of the ocean, and 3852 feet above the Dead Sea. Latitude 31 deg. 46' 43' north. Longitude 35 deg. 13' east of Greenwich.

HISTORY. First mentioned as Salem, Gen. 14:18, and residence of Melchizedek. Was captured by the Jebusites and they called it Jebus. Afterward the two words were united into "Jerusalem" and is first mentioned as such in Josh. 10:1. In 1444 B. C. Joshua captured a portion of the city from the Jebusites. After the death of Joshua the men of Judah and Simeon smote it with the sword and set it on fire, (Jud. 1:8,) but were unable to drive out the Jebusites. Jud. 1:21; Josh. 15:63. It is recorded that Judah and Benjamin dwelt there with the Jebusites.

DAVIDIC PERIOD. The city is not mentioned again until the time of Saul when it is stated (1 Sam. 17:54) that David took the head of Goliath to the City of Jerusalem. After David was called to rule all Israel he took the stronghold of Zion from the Jebusites, Joab being the first to scale the wall. 2 Sam. 5:5-9; 1 Chron. 11:4-8. This was about 1046 B. C. David made it the capital of the united kingdom, built an altar at the threshing floor of Araunah and moved the ark of the covenant to the city. 2 Sam. 24:15-25. David fortified it and gathered material for the purpose of building the temple of Jehovah.

SOLOMON. The death of David (1010 B. C.) brought Solomon to the throne who built the temple, erected the royal palace, constructed a vast water system and otherwise enlarged and beautified the city. It became the center of all civil and religious activities and was the place where the Lord God put His name. Deut. 12:5.

REHOBAM. Under the reign of Rehoboam the splendor of the city was somewhat lessened as the ten tribes under Jeroboam instituted their false worship at Bethel and Dan and went no longer up to Jerusalem to worship. 1 Kings 26:30.

UNDER THE DIFFERENT KINGS. As the kings of Judah alternated between good and evil the city correspondingly prospered or declined. Under Rehoboam in 970 B. C., it was taken by Shishak, king of Egypt, and the temple was pillaged. 2 Chron. 12:9. Under Amaziah it was again taken by Joash king of Is-

rael, and 400 cubits of the wall broken down. He also took all the gold and silver of the temple. 2 Kings 14:13. Uzziah, the son of Amaziah, and Jotham, the grandson both built towers and fortifications. 2 Chron. 26 and 27. Hezekiah (728 B. C.) was a great builder and improver. His most eminent work being the great subterranean aqueduct whereby the waters of the upper pool of Gihon were brought to the city. 2 Chron. 22:30, 23:14.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR. After a siege of three years the city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, the walls razed, the temple destroyed and the palaces burned. The city was smitten with the calamity prophesied by Moses. Lev. 26:14. Deut. 28. This was in the year 588 B. C.

THE EXILE. During this period of 70 years this city lay waste and was largely uninhabited.

THE RESTORATION. By the efforts of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah and the friendliness of the Persian Monarchs, the Jews were enabled to rebuild their city and temple, and a considerable number of them were reinstated in the land.

GRECIAN PERIOD. It is related by Josephus that when the dominion of the world passed from the Persians to the Greeks that Alexander the Great advanced to punish the city because they had remained friendly to the Persians during the siege of Tyre. He was turned from his purpose by Jaddua, the high priest who met him at the head of a delegation of priests all dressed in white, whom Alexander recognized as personages seen before in a dream. (Antiq. 11:8.) B. C. 324 Ptolemy, on the Sabbath day plundered the city and carried many of the Jews captive to Egypt. In B. C. 302, with the whole of Palestine it was annexed to Egypt.

Jerusalem enjoyed intermittent periods of tranquility under the various Ptolemies until, favoring the cause of Antiochus, they assisted him in expelling the Egyptian garrison from the city. Antiochus Epiphanes, the brother and successor of Antiochus sought to utterly obliterate every trace of Jewish national spirit and religion, consequently he plundered Jerusalem set up an image of Jupiter in the temple, abolished the Jewish law, tore down the city walls and erected a fort on Zion's hill and expelled the priests. This was in the year 167 B. C. This led to the celebrated revolt of the Maccabees who after a long sanguinary struggle regained possession of the city, repaired the temple and restored the worship. B. C. 163.

THE ROMANS. One hundred years later and on the very day observed by the Jews as one of fasting and mourning in commemoration of the Babylonian conquest Pompey, emperor of Rome, took the city. Twelve thousand Jews were put to death in the temple court but the temple itself was spared. However, eighteen years later these were seized by Crassus. In B. C. 43 Antipater, father of Herod the Great, rebuilt the walls destroyed by Pompey and laid out the city on the magnificent lines followed by

Herod the Great. The temple itself was torn down by the latter and rebuilt with a splendor exceeding that of Solomon's temple. It was in the broad courts of this temple that our Saviour walked and taught and it was these "goodly stones" which were so much admired by the apostles. This was the temple one stone of which was not to be left on another.

In A. D. 70, after the most memorable siege in history, lasting for three years and six months the Romans under Titus destroyed the very foundations of the temple and the walls were razed to the ground—all in literal and exact fulfilment of the Saviour's prediction. One million Jews perished and Zion was plowed as a field and Jerusalem became heaps, exactly 661 years after it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Mic. 3:12. For fifty years it lay waste but not until 135 A. D., were the Jews finally dispersed as Adrian had partially rebuilt the city and allowed some Jews to return. It then became a Roman colony in which no Jew was allowed and a statue of a hog placed over the Bethlehem gate. The history from the rebuilding by Adrian till the time of Constantine is almost blank. In 326 it was visited by the mother of Constantine who, in her eightieth year erected a church on the traditional site of the Nativity. In 335 Constantine removed the statue of Venus from the site of the Holy Sepulchre and built a church there. In 362 Julian the Apostate, attempted to restore the Jews and rebuild the temple but failed. Then came an era of pilgrimages to the holy city on the part of the Christian world during which time many magnificent churches were built. Not long did the city enjoy peace, for in 614 it was again taken by the Persians in whose hands it remained until 636 when it was taken by the Mohammedan Caliph Omar, who built the mosque bearing his name on the site of the Jewish temple. The city again began to be visited by large numbers of Christian pilgrims as the year 1000 drew on, for the belief was general that the end of the world would come in that year. This was likely caused by the idea being advanced that the Millennium began with the first advent of Christ. Such large numbers of pilgrims seeing the sacred places the prey and possession of unbelievers led to the Crusades. In 1099 it fell into the hands of the Egyptians for a short while but was taken by the Christians under Godfrey De Bouillon.

For 88 years it remained in the hands of the hands of the Christians and was then taken by Saladin in 1187. In 1219 its walls were destroyed by Sultan Menelik when it was threatened by Richard of England.

For ten years it was defenseless, was then for ten years more made over to the Christians under a treaty made by Emperor Frederick II, of Germany. It was again seized by the Mohammedans under David of Kerek. Four years later it was again taken by the Christians and its works restored but the following year, 1244, the wild Kharismian hordes sacked the city and in the hands of the Mohammedans it remained until the latter part of 1917 when it was taken from the Turks by the British.

Surely no spot on earth has such a history and no city has suffered so much from war and siege. What has happened to Jerusalem in the past has been in literal fulfillment of prophecy. What it is destined to be in the future is not written in the deliberations of international war or peace commissions, nor yet in the proceedings of Zionistic congresses but in the Word of God. What it is destined to be will be in as literal fulfillment of recorded prophecy as its past history has been.

BACK FROM BABYLON.

(A parallel of inspired prophecy and inspired history).

E. L. JORGENSEN.

On the question as to whether the return from Babylon fulfilled the prophetic predictions touching Israel's re-occupancy of their land, the statements of the Scriptures themselves ought to be most convincing.

Three journeys were made from Babylon to Jerusalem' (four counting Nehemiah's second trip). First, Zerubbabel returned with 42,360. Certainly not more than 50,000. The figure probably included the singers, 200 or more; and the 7,337 servants were hardly Israelites, as such servitude was forbidden by the law. (Ez. 2:64, 65; Neh. 7:66, 67).

Eighty years or so after Zerubbabel, Ezra returned and with him about 1800 males (Ez. 8:1-20). Only the men are listed, and they would naturally be in the majority in such expedition, though there were some children (8:21), and therefore probably women also. Ezra records it thus: "And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinim, unto Jerusalem" (7:7). For good measure, we will say perhaps there were four to every male listed, or about 7,000 in the Ezra expedition.

A dozen years or more after Ezra's return and about ninety years after Zerubbabel's expedition, Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem. No Israelite accompanies him so far as the record shows: only a Babylonian military escort (Neh. 13:6, 7).

From these records, it is clear that less than 50,000 Jews returned from Babylon in the days of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. They were but a remnant; they were bondmen still; they were tributary to Babylon; they had no autonomous government, constituting but a "province."

Compare the predictions on the left (next page) with the historical statements in the column at the right, and *see for yourself, from God's own Word*, that these predictions were not fulfilled in the return from Babylon:

Prophecies of the Restoration.

"He that scattered Israel will gather him . . . and they shall come and sing in the height of Zion. . . . and they shall not sorrow any more at all." Jer. 31:10-12.

"I will plant them in this land like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." Jer. 32:42.

"I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and I will build them as at the first." Jer. 33:7.

"I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it and will do better unto you than at your beginnings . . . neither shalt thou cause thy nation to stumble any more." Ez. 3:10-15.

"I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." Jer. 30:3.

"And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant wherein your fathers dwelt; . . . they and their children and their children's children, forever." Ez. 34:25.

"They shall no more be a prey to the nations. . . . they shall no more be consumed with famine in the land, neither bear the shame of the nations . . . and will gather them. . . and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation . . . and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations. . . . any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions." Ez. 37:21-23.

History after the Return.

"The old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before, wept with a loud voice," and many shouted aloud for joy." Ezra 3:12.

"The city of my father's sepulchres lieth waste; and the gates thereof are consumed with fire." Neh. 2:3.

"Grace hath been showed us from Jehovah our God to leave us a remnant to escape." Ez. 9:8.

"We are bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage." Ez. 9:9.

"We are left a remnant that is escaped, as it is this day." Ez. 9:15.

"The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down and the gates thereof are burned with fire." Neh. 1:3.

"Behold we are servants this day; and as for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have power over our bodies and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." Neh. 9:36, 37.

"For your sake the heavens withhold the dew, and the earth withholdeth its fruit, And I called for a drought upon the land." Haggai 1:10, 11.

"O priests that despise my name Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar" Mal 1:6, 7.

"Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words." Mal. 2:17.

"Return unto me . . . ye are cursed with the curse, for ye rob me, even this whole nation." Mal. 3:7, 8, 9.

"Your words have been stout against me." Mal. 3:13.

Note: I have exercised care in the omissions (indicated by periods) not to affect the sense. The bold type is to call attention to important utterances and comparisons.

EARLY CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD
WAR.

W. J. BROWN.

The following quotation is from Lecky's History of European Morals, a reliable and authentic history of acknowledged accuracy.

"It is not surprising that a religious system which made it a main object to inculcate moral excellence, and which by its doctrine of future retribution, by its organization, and by its capacity of producing a disinterested enthusiasm, acquired an unexampled supremacy over the human mind, should have raised its disciples to a very high condition of sanctity. There can, indeed, be little doubt that, for *nearly two hundred years after its establishment in Europe*, the Christian community exhibited a moral purity which, if it has been equalled, has never for any long period been surpassed. *Completely separated from the Roman world that was around them, abstaining alike from political life, from appeals to the tribunals, and from military occupations; looking forward continually to the immediate Advent of their Master, and the destruction of the Empire in which they dwelt*, and animated by all the fervor of a young religion, the Christians found within themselves a whole order of ideas and feelings sufficiently powerful to guard them from the contaminations of their age. In their general bearings toward society, and in the nature and minuteness of their scruples, they probably bore a greater resemblance to the Quakers than to any other sect." Vol. 2, p. 11.

"In the first two centuries of the Christian Church the moral elevation was extremely high, and was continually appealed to as proof of the divinity of their creed. The first aspect in which Christianity presented itself to the world was as a declaration of the fraternity of men in Christ. Considered as immortal beings destined for the extremes of happiness or of misery, and united to one another by a special community of redemption, the first and most manifest duty of a Christian man was to look upon his fellowmen as sacred beings, and from this notion grew up the eminently Christian idea of the sanctity of all human life.

"The relation of Christianity to the sentiments of patriotism were from the first very unfortunate. While the Christians were, for obvious reasons, completely separated from the national spirit of Judea, they found themselves equally at variance with the lingering remnants of Roman patriotism. Rome was to them the power of Anti-Christ, and its overthrow the necessary prelude to the millennial reign. They formed an illegal organization, directly opposed to the genius of the Empire, anticipating its speedy destruction, looking back with something more than despondency to the fate of the heroes who adorned its past, and refusing resolutely to participate in those national spectacles which were the symbols and the expressions of patriotic feeling.

Though scrupulously averse to all rebellion, they rarely concealed their sentiments, and the whole tendency of their teaching was to withdraw men as far as possible both from the functions and the enthusiasms of public life. It was at once their confession and their boast, that no interests were more indifferent to them than those of their country. They regarded the lawfulness of taking up arms as very questionable, and all those proud and aspiring qualities that constitute the distinct beauty of the soldier's character as emphatically unchristian. Their home and their interest were in another country, and provided only they were unmolested in their worship, they avowed with frankness, long after the Empire had become Christian, that it was a matter of indifference to them under what rule they lived." Vol. 2, page 140.

This is how Christians viewed the matter of church and state in the days of her purity. But a great change came over the church in the beginning of the third century. Lecky tells us how it was after the falling away began.

"It has been boldly predicted by some of the early Christians that the conversion of the world would lead to the establishment of permanent peace. In looking back with our present experience, we are driven to the melancholy conclusion that, instead of diminishing the number of wars, ecclesiastical influence has actually and very seriously increased it. We may look in vain for any period since Constantine, in which the *clergy*, as a body, exerted themselves to repress the military spirit, or to prevent or to abridge a particular war, with an energy at all comparable to that which they displayed in stimulating the fanaticism of the crusaders, in producing the atrocious massacre of the Albigenses, in embittering the religious contests that followed the Reformation The broad fact remains, that with the exception of Mohammedanism, no other religion has done so much to produce war as was done by the religious teachers of Christendom during several centuries The peace principles, that were so common before Constantine, have found scarcely an echo except from Erasmus, the Anabaptists, and the Quakers."

This is just one of MANY historians that confirm the teachings of the New Testament on the relation of Christianity to war, by showing us how those of the Lord's people living before all apostasies took place, understood the Master and His apostles.

Note by the Editor: It may add to the interest and better understanding of this quotation to remember that the historian Lecky himself was an unbeliever, intent only to state the facts concerning the early Christians as they looked to a man of the world.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas."

A FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY.

J. EDWARD ROYD.

A careful comparison of the many predictive statements found in the New Testament concerning the "last days," with the conditions and developments of the present, will scarcely allow one to escape the conclusion that we are now, in all probability, living very near the close of this age. The rise and rapid progress of the God-dishonoring (and man-honoring) cults, like Christian Science and New Thought; the startling development of spirit phenomena, the "giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons," in modern Spiritualism; the filling of the earth with violence, and other circumstances which remind us of the days of Noah—typical of the closing days of this age; the apparent increase of the number of earthquakes and other disturbances of nature; the love of money which is so manifest on every hand, and which is the very foundation of the great commercial system of our day; the self-love, worldly-mindedness, and pleasure-seeking disposition of a large part of the church membership of our day;—all these deeply impress us with the thought that the time is short—very short—and that soon "the Coming One will be here and will not tarry." (Read Matt. 24:37-44; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5). With redoubled force comes our Savior's admonition, "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is."

If anything more were needed to encourage us in this view that we are now in the last days, it would surely be found in the attitude which many assume toward this very subject. For indeed they treat it lightly, as if it were nothing more than a hallucination of a diseased imagination, and altogether unworthy of the thoughtful consideration of men in this "age of progress" and optimism! As an instance of the expression of this attitude, the following is copied from an editorial which appeared some weeks ago in *The Pathfinder*, a news journal of recognized standing and wide circulation. "The world is not going to end this year or next year, or at any time that we need worry about. It has been going on for millions of years, and there is no reason why it should not continue to go on for millions of years longer. * * * Prophets may come and prophets may go, but the world goes on forever—or at least so long that it means eternity to the finite mind."

Now, with this statement, which no doubt correctly represents the popular notion of the day, compare another—one which was made almost two thousand years ago: "Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.'" (2 Peter 3:3, 4). Note the striking similarity between the two! In

his very efforts to allay the fears that some might entertain, the unbeliever is fulfilling in a remarkable way Peter's prediction concerning the mockers of *the last days*, making the very argument which the Apostle nearly two millenniums ago declared would be made. Surely this is not without its significance. We may expect the world as a whole, together with the worldly-minded and pleasure-loving portion of the churches, to continue on in unbelief, until the fearful storm of God's wrath has overwhelmed them, and the Lord has received His own unto Himself. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight." (2 Peter 3:14).

BIBLE STUDY COURSE

R. H. B.

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH.

Chapters 10-23.

FIRST DAY: *The Assyrian.* First we, must get the setting. What had the Assyrian already done in Hezekiah's time? 2 Kings 17:1-6. It had been predicted to Ahaz that *Israel* would be desolated by the King of Assyria, and that *Judah* would be invaded (Isa. 7:16, 17; 8:7, 8). Read now carefully Isa. 36 and 37). Note the Assyrian's proud, boastful message, and how he ranks the God of Israel along with the gods of the nations and despises them all alike. Then Hezekiah's distress; a second message (by letter, this time) of the same insulting tone, which letter Hezekiah spreads before Jehovah; and then God's answer (1) to the Assyrian; (2) to Hezekiah. Then the marvellous deliverance. This ground has been covered in the lessons on II. Kings 18, 19. But we need a new study of it now in order to prepare for the prophetic message in Isa. 10.

SECOND DAY: *The Prophecy about the Assyrian.* Isa. 10:4-34. The Assyrian is but the tool of Jehovah—"an instrument of unrighteousness"—the rod and staff by which just chastisement is inflicted upon guilty nations. (vs. 5, 6.) The Assyrian himself is unconscious of that. He follows only the impulse of his own wild ambition in boastfulness and pride of power, blaspheming God incidently. (Vs. 7-11). Because of this, God will turn his hand in judgment upon the Assyrian, as soon as He has done using him. (Vs. 12-19). The Assyrian's mistake in v. 13 appears from Acts 17:26. Consider world-affairs of the present day in the light of this. The Assyrian will meet his doom when he clashes with the Holy One of Israel who dwells in Zion (v. 17). After the manner of the prophets, Isaiah now slips from the present case of the Assyrian (who is therefore the type of the final great oppressor, the Assyrian of the End) to Israel's last great trial and deliverance. (Vs. 20-27). *Then they will, be*

cured forever of depending on the arm of flesh for help (Hosea 14:3). Who is the "*mighty God*" to whom the Remnant will return? See Isa. 9:6. See in 7:3, margin, the meaning of "Shear-jashub," and consider 8:18. On the *Remnant*, see Jer. 31:2, 7, 8. God will not make a full end of Israel (Jer. 30:11), but of His work in the earth (v. 13) which involves a terrific slaughter and will greatly diminish its inhabitants. (Ps. 46:8-10). After *that* deliverance Israel will be free and unmolested. (Jer. 30:4-10). The progress of the Assyrian army toward Jerusalem is traced, and the people re-assured, vs. 28:34.

THIRD DAY: *The Reign of the Branch of Jesse's Stock*. Isaiah 11. The Assyrian army is likened to a *forest* (10:18, 33, 34)—mighty trees that shall be cut down. But out of the stock of Jesse (David's ancestor) shall come a little *shoot*, a bit of a *branch*, which shall prove mightier than all the mighty Assyrian forest. He is anointed with the Holy Spirit; He rules in strict righteousness. Comp. with v. 4, 2 Thess. 2:8 and Rev. 19:11-16. The results of His rule, vs. 6-9. The nations shall seek unto Him and His resting-place will be glorious. (Isa. 4:3-5; Ps. 132:13-17) Read Psalm 72. In that day, for the second time, all the scattered remnant of the outcasts of Israel will be regathered from the ends of the earth, and they shall have the supremacy over the nations. Comp. v. 16 with Jer. 16:14-16. With vs. 6-9 consider Acts 3:19-21.

FOURTH DAY.—*Israel's Song of Thanksgiving*. Isa. 12. Compare their song when they were freed from Egyptian bondage, Exod. 15 and note resemblance. Recall Jer. 16:14, 15. With v. 1 compare Isa. 40:1, 2; 54:7-10. Their long waiting-time is over (Mic. 7:7-12). Their exceeding great blessing becomes a blessing world-wide, to all nations, vs. 4-6. (Read here Ps. 67; Rom. 11:12, 15). Henceforth God dwells in their midst. Joel 3:17.

THE "BURDENS." ISAIAH 13:23.

FIFTH DAY: *The Burden of Babylon*. Isa. 13. Here we meet again the prophetic peculiarity: The near impending doom of Babylon is his first theme (vs. 2-5), but the vision opens out into the all-important End-time. For Babylon re-appears in the time of the End. (Rev. 18) and her future judgment (of which that earlier judgment was but a premonition) is intimately bound up with the great Day of the Lord, the punishment of the whole world, the *final* deliverance of Israel, (vs. 6-16). *The Day of Jehovah*—we have had a description of it in Isa. 2:12-22, and in the reference to Zeph. 1:14-18, which re-read. Comp. also Hag. 2:21, 22. Note the cause and extent of the punishment in v. 11; and the result, v. 12. With v. 10 comp. Luke 21:25, 26. In verses 17-22 he returns again to the foreground of the picture: the then nearing judgment of Babylon.

SIXTH DAY: *The Burden of Babylon*, continued. Isaiah 14. The day of Babylon's fall and the destruction of Babylon's king is also the day of Israel's restoration and reinstatement. Vs. 1,

2. Jehovah's determinations regarding Israel. The time-note in v. 3 shows that this refers to nothing in the past. Their first restoration from Babylonian captivity left them in bondage and miserable servitude (Ezr. 9:9; Neh. 9:32, 36, 37). This King of Babylon is the last great oppressor of Israel, the last universal ruler and head of the last world-power; identical with the Man of Sin of 2 Thess. 2, and the Beast of Rev. 13. Comp. vs. 13, 14, his wicked ambitions, with 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 8, 15. With his destruction relief comes to the whole earth, for he was the afflicter of all mankind (vs. 6-8). Sheol's greeting of him when he descends into the land of the dead is very impressive. Note the five-fold "I will" in vs. 13, 14. (Compare with this personage Dan. 7:23-25; 8:23-25; esp. 11:36, 37 and 12:1). This too is "the Assyrian" of the End, vs. 24-27; recall chapt. 10. *The burden concerning Philistia*, vs. 28-32. Her rest does not come with the Assyrian's destruction. Philistia's ambassador gets an answer to his enquiry. (V. 32).

SEVENTH DAY.—*The Burden of Moab*. Isa. 15, 16. On Moab's character and destiny, see Jer. 48, esp. vs. 7, 11, 12, 26-29, 42, 47. We must not forget that what is said of Moab herself, applies also to other nations who are of like character. 16:1-5 falls into the "Kingdom period"—the reign of the gracious King (Isa. 11:1-5; Ps. 72). V. 1. A tribute, a propitiatory gift from Selah (a fortress of Moab) is sent (as tribute and overtures of peace) to Zion. Vs. 2-4 the fugitive remnant of Moab find mercy at the hands of Israel. The Prince of the House of David rules in Zion. (Isa. 11:1-5). This is the far view, the vision of Moab's part in the end-time. 16:6-14 are occupied with the nearer judgments that were then about to fall upon Moab.

EIGHTH DAY: *The Burden of Damascus*. Isa. 17. Remember that Damascus (capital of Syria) was confederate with Ephraim. (Isa. 7:1-9); therefore the judgments of the two are given together, v. 3. Israel's fearful sifting (vs. 4-6) has its desired effect "in that day," vs. 7-9. Their former guilt, vs. 10, 11; cp. Deut. 32:15; Isa. 22:11.

The Last Storm: the picture of Israel's great final distress, vs. 12-14. It is "the day of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. 30:4-7.) Note the figure of the seas and the rushing waters, "the uproar of many peoples," and the chaff chased before the wind, and the whirling dust. See Dan. 2:35; Ps. 83:2-13. The sudden deliverance: v. 14; Isa. 29:5-8; Zech. 14:2-9.

NINTH DAY: *The Land of Whirring Wings*. Isa. 18. This prophecy is obscurely worded and ambiguous in language. Is it a land of shadowing wings (to protect Israel?); or a land of whirring wings, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia (and therefore in the West, beyond the sea)? Is the nation scattered and peeled Israel, despoiled by the rivers (8:7); or is it another nation, a nation "tall and smooth," whose land is divided into sections by its rivers? The import of the matter is world-wide (v. 3). The

land of rustling wings sends ambassadors in vessels of paper-reed upon the waters, to another nation (the nation "tall and smooth, etc.") There follows a world-judgment, and the "nation tall and smooth" brings its tribute offering to Jehovah who dwelleth in Zion. Comp. Isa. 16:1; 60:9. The prophecy looks forward to the glorious day to come.

TENTH DAY: *The Burden of Egypt.* Isa. 19, 20. A significant feature of the judgment of Egypt: God brings about their destruction by depriving them of counsel and wise guidance. Thus they soon work out their own destruction. In their folly they turn to occult arts, which hastens their down-fall and bondage. From 19:17-25 the prophecy is unfulfilled. Note Jehovah's gracious ultimate purpose toward Egypt, vs. 24, 25, Assyria herself even included in it. For does He not love *the whole world*? Remember, too, the fact that these prophecies disclose God's ways and plans, His attitude and manner of dealing with all sorts of human beings. With chapter 20 (which shows the folly of depending on Egypt for help) compare 30:1-5.

ELEVENTH DAY: *The Burden of "the Wilderness of the Sea."* The prophecy has reference to the doom of Babylon. Their careless feasting in the fateful hour (v. 5) is a matter of history. Cp. Dan. 5:1-4, 30, 31. The watchman announces to the Lord with lion-voice what he sees; and the Lord replies, vs. 8, 9. The nearer fulfillment of this is in Babylon's fall at the hands of the Medes, 13:17. The remoter fulfillment is pointed out in Rev. 14:8 and Rev. 18. Read Jer. 51. Babylon is the Lord's threshing-floor; but see Mic. 4:13. *The Burden of Dumah.* Vs. 11, 12. Mt. Seir is in Edom. An anxious question What is the answer? There is indeed a morning dawning for those who fear God's name (Mal. 4:2); but to others it will be the fall of the dreadful night (Amos 5:18-20). *The Burden upon Arabia*, vs. 13-17. Its fulfillment is secured by the best assurance, v. 17.

TWELFTH DAY. *The Burden of the Valley of Vision.* Isa. 22. Clearly refers to Jerusalem, vs. 4, 9. The prophet beholds her in dire distress, and shares with her, vs. 1-5. In the face of danger Judah made every provision for defense and protection except the one thing needful: *they looked not unto Him that did it and purposed it long ago*, and who alone could have helped. (31:1.) How like the unbelief of our own day! They do not regard the operation of His hands (5:12; Ps. 28:5). When God calls them to repentance they say. "It is of no use," and in the recklessness of unbelieving despair, they say, "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die." *This iniquity God does not forgive.* (Vs. 12-14). *Hilkiah and the Key of David.* vs. 15-25. Key, robe, and girdle were Shebna's, the insignia of his office as treasurer and steward of the house of David. It is transferred to Hilkiah. The "government" of v. 21 was the administration of David's house, which was the steward's prerogative. In Rev. 1 and 3 this imagery is applied to Christ, for it is His to dispense

"the sure mercies of David," and to administrate the blessings of the Davidic Covenant. Is Hilkiah a type of Christ, and v. 25 an intimation of Christ's death? Dan. 9:27.

THIRTEENTH DAY: *The Burden of Tyre.* Isa. 23. Her impending doom, vs. 1-7. Jehovah did it, vs. 8-12. God has set Himself to overthrow man's pride, and the glory of his godless civilization and proud achievement. Consider and compare with ours, the spirit of Cain's civilization. Gen. 4:16-24. Tyre was the exponent of commercialism. That is the biggest word in the world's national and international affairs today. It must meet the same fate as Tyre's commercialism. In vs. 13-18 we see Tyre also restored and sending her profits and merchandise as tribute to Jehovah to sustain His ministers. Her traffic shall be consecrated to Him. (Cp. Zech. 14:20, 21). Read over Ezek. 26, 27, 28.

Here end the "Burdens;" only once after this a burden message occurs. (Isa. 30:6).

Here is a card used in the adult class of a wide-awake Louisville church which may be suggestive and helpful to our teacher-readers. It is designed to send out by mail, with a personal word added, especially to absentees.

"Boost the Big Bible Class."

"Double its membership in 1918."

"100 enrolled by the end of 1918."

(We have sixty-five now.)

"Each one win one" will do it.

You win one!

"One new member each Lord's day" will do it.

(*You bring one this week!*)

Provided all old members stick—*You stick.*

The lesson Sunday will be:

"Be in the Big Adult Bible Class."

"Be one of the hundred."

Not for mere numbers, but for more knowledge.

Highland Church of Christ, Bardstown Road & Longest.

The 1917 Word and Work.

BOUND VOLUME NOW READY.

More than 500 pages. Some of the Choicest Reading Matter and true Bible Teaching.

PRICE ONE DOLLAR.

They Go Fast—Order Quickly.

WORD AND WORK, Louisville, Ky.

ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

Do Not Forget. * * The "Great Commission" is the bud, Christianity is the blossom. * * John, the Forerunner, was a missionary—a typical missionary—a man of plain clothes, out in the wilderness, crying earnestly to the people to repent, and he was sent of God.

Do Not Forget the Missionaries. * * It has been said there are 27,000,000 orphans, 6,000,000 child wives, 277,000,000 illiterates and 293,000,000 non-Christians in India. * * What kind of Christianity would it be that had no Lord's Supper in it? The same kind that has no missionary work in it, that is, it would be incomplete Christianity.

Have You Forgotten? * * Because a two-months-old babe in China threw up its milk as babies do, it was fed scorpion's broth. * * Who that is suitable will take up Bro. Vincent's work in Japan? Who will go to co-operate with Bro. McCaleb? Who is the next man for India? * * None of us should neglect the easy parts of mission work. And what are the easy parts? To pray and to pay. * * * Why do not the churches promptly invite Bro. C. C. Klingman, of Texas (returned missionary from Japan) to work among the California-Japanese? Only 19 more persons or congregations willing to give \$5.00 a month for his personal support are needed to assure him \$100.00 a month for a year. Who makes the number one less?

Have You Forgotten the Missionaries? Your daily duties in the home, store or workshop; the loud and repeated calls for various ends, such as Liberty Loans, Red Cross funds, Y. M. C. A. war work, Thrift Stamps, Red Cross seals, war sufferer's relief, etc., etc., may (is that the word?) crowd the missionaries out of your mind. Behind some of the above, or all of them, there are powerful agencies. With good organization, much zeal and great publicity; at least some of them have moved vast sums of money. If a Christian can engage in but one of two good and commendable works, he should without doubt, choose the one which is better and more commendable for him. Missions minister to lost men's physical and spiritual interests for time and eternity, and are the fulfillment of the teaching of Holy Scripture. Those who can be asked to give to the Red Cross, for example, are nearly 100,000,000 in the U. S., but those whom we may ask to feed and clothe Bros. McHenry, Martin and other deserving missionaries are the conservative (non-society) Christians who are but a handful and most of them do not give to this part of God's work. *Please, do not forget the missionaries.* Funds sent to me (care of Word and Work, or directly to Buechel, Ky.,) will be forwarded free.

FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 5.

February 5, 1918.

JESUS LORD OF THE SABBATH.

Golden Text: "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:28.

Lesson Text: Mark 2:23-3:5. Read Matt. 12:1-8.

The Scripture Text used in these lessons is the American Standard Revised Version, Copyright, Nelson & Sons.

23. And it came to pass, that he was going on the sabbath day through the grainfields; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears. 24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? 25 And he said unto them, Did ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was hungry, he and they that were with him? 26 How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the showbread, which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests, and gave also to them that were with him? 27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: 28 so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath. 1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there who had his hand withered. 2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. 3 And he saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? But they held their peace. 5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored.

Chapter 3, Verses 1, 2. What was Jesus' custom? Luke 4:16. What were the Pharisees doing again? Cp. Luke 14:1. What was their object in so watching him?

Verses 3, 4. Look over the whole account and see whether anything that Jesus did, or told the man to do, could be called "Sabbath-breaking." What kind of work was always in order on the Sabbath? (Matt. 12:11, 12; John 5:17). Why did they keep still? Cp. Matt. 21:24-27.

Verse 5. Does Love ever have anger? Why was Jesus angry? What other emotion filled His heart and why? Cp. Eph. 4:30. What caution does God give us respecting anger? Eph. 4:26-31. Why? Jas. 1:19, 20. How

Verse 23. Did the disciples have a right to eat grain out of other men's fields? Deut. 23:25. Matthew 12:1 tells us why they did it. Think on that.

Verse 24. Why did the Pharisees note this so quickly? (See Isa. 29:20, 21). What did they think was unlawful?

Verse 25. Could Jesus have answered them scathingly, and exposed their hypocrisy with sharp words? Why did He not? To what Old Testament incident does He refer them? Read the account. 1 Sam. 21:1-6.

Verse 26. Was David's deed "lawful?" Had the Pharisees ever dared to condemn David (the Lord's anointed king) for the illegality of his action? If then in that case the dignity of David's person and position put David beyond their criticism, was not the Son of God due a like respect? (John 8:49). But after all was the action of His disciples really wrong and unlawful? On what other ground does Jesus defend the action of His disciples even if it had been a case of Sabbath-breaking? See Matt. 12:5, 6.

Verse 27. Was the Sabbath-law intended to bring misery and distress to men, or was it designed for their benefit? Cp. Matt. 12:7.

Verse 28. Has the Son of man jurisdiction over the Sabbath also, to regulate it or do with it as He pleased? What is the force of the expression, "even of the Sabbath?" (A. V., "also of the Sabbath.") Is He Lord of every other day and thing likewise?

could Jesus ask a man to stretch forth a paralyzed hand? When Jesus commands anything does His power go with the command, to enable us to fulfill it? Cp. Mat. 14:29.

NOTES ON LESSON 5.

THEY WERE HUNGRY.

Matthew 12:1-8 should be studied alongside of this lesson. The disciples who walked with Jesus got hungry once in awhile. The Lord Himself surely also. Is it a great thing if His faithful servants today should sometimes feel the pinch? Nevertheless they never really lacked anything. (Luke 22:35). God gave them all they needed as they needed it. They had no right to be anxious. (Matt. 6:25-34). Neither have we. (Phil. 4:6, 7). "No good thing"—no thing that is really good for us at any time—"will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. 84:11.

MERCY, NOT SACRIFICE.

God had not made the Sabbath-law to add to the burden and the sufferings of human beings, but (as in all His ordinances) to alleviate their lot and bless them. In the exceptions He had made on behalf of even suffering beasts, God showed that it was not the misery of either beast or man that He desired. "I have desired mercy and not sacrifice." When sacrifice means needless distress, God prefers mercy.

THE SABBATH CEREMONIAL.

The distinction is sometimes made between "moral" and "ceremonial" commandments: the "moral" requirements being those which are in themselves right, and which can never be abrogated; the "ceremonial" on the other hand, relating to forms and outward arbitrary commands and observances as for example animal-sacrifices, washings, regulations of clean and unclean meats, etc., which can be abolished in the change of dispensations. Such a distinction of course exists. But we are told further that the Ten Commandments constitute the unalterable moral law; while all the rest of the Old Covenant requirements are "ceremonial;" and that the latter passed away, but the Ten Commandments remain forever. This is not true. For on the one hand the rest of the old Law contained many precepts which would have to be classed as "moral," although not found in the Ten Commandments. (See, for example, in Exod. 21-23; Lev. 18-22). On the other hand the Sabbath law found among the Ten is clearly ceremonial. A "moral requirement" may, in a new dispensation, be enforced upon a different ground, and on new authority, but could never be set aside at any time, not even for a single instance. It would not be possible, for example, that in any dispensation, or in any special case, or at any time God could authorize lying. Only a ceremonial requirement can be set aside. Now the Sabbath-commandment was set aside.

1. The priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless. Matt. 12:5. If such an exception could be made because of the Temple and the Temple-service, Jesus reasons, then His own august presence can much more authorize a similar setting aside of Sabbath regulation.

2. For the sake of mercy, in the case of suffering beasts (and, of course, much more in the case of needy and suffering men) the Sabbath-law can, yea, ought to be, set aside, and labor of relief be performed. (Matt. 12:11, 12).

Therefore the Son of man, being Lord even of the Sabbath, could and did set it aside when and as He pleased. He did finally take it entirely out of the way, nailing it to His cross, and never from Pentecost on do we find the requirement of the Sabbath imposed upon Christians, nor a (distinctively) Christian assembly taking place on the Sabbath. The only time Paul in all his fourteen epistles mentions the Sabbath is when he says in the Holy Spirit; "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or or a sabbath day," that is, any sort of sabbath-day required under the Old Dispensation. Col. 2:14-17. Of the false teachers who tried to bind the Law upon Christians, the New Testament speaks very harshly, Acts 15:24; Gal. 5:12. The day mentioned as the day of Christian assembly is the first day of the week. Acts 20:7.

SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 6.

February 10, 1918.

JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE.

Golden Text: "And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach." Mark 3:14.

Lesson Text: Mark 3:7-19a. Read Matt. 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16; John 15:15-27.

7 And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him. 9 And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him: 10 for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him. 11 And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. 12 And he charged them much that they should not make him known, 13 And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would; and they went unto him. 14 And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15 and to have authority to cast out demons: 16 and Simon he surnamed Peter; 17 and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and them he surnamed Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder: 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, 19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

Verses 14, 15. What work did Jesus have in mind for the twelve? What great advantage did He give them in order to prepare them? (Acts 4:13). Can any man truly preach the gospel until he has spent time with Jesus?

Verses 16-19. What special things do we know of the first named James? Acts 12:2. Of the other James? Acts 15:13. Of Andrew? John 1:40-42. Of Philip? John 14:8, 9. Of Matthew? Matt. 9:9. Of Thomas? John 20:24-29. What did Jesus say about these men in John 17:6-12? What did He say of Judas Iscariot? John 6:64, 70, 71.

Verses 7, 8. Did the work of Jesus attract much attention? Acts 26:26. Did Jesus bank much on such crowds? (See how Jesus sifted the "multitude." in Luke 14:25-27). What was the attraction? John 4:48. Whence did these multitudes come?

Verses 9, 10. Why did Jesus enter the boat? Why did the crowd throng upon Jesus? Were these healings done for the healing's sake, or for a greater purpose? John 20:31; Acts 2:22; John 5:36. Do the crowds press upon Jesus as much for the spiritual healing and salvation He is able to give? Why not? In a few years does it make any difference whether our bodies were in good health or not? But will it make a difference whether we have believed, obeyed and stood fast in "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"? What sort of trade do those make who for the promise of bodily healing forsake the true gospel and embrace a false doctrine? (2 Cor. 11:14).

Verses 11, 12. What did the demons say of Jesus? Did Jesus accept their confession of Him? Would He accept such testimony today?

Verse 13. The Choice of the Apostles. What preparation did Jesus make for this important step? See Luke 6:12, 13. Is the selection of men for God's work an important matter? (Cp. Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:2-13). Whom did Jesus call to Him? Cp. John 15:16. Was this a call for salvation, or for a work? But did much opportunity for salvation go with it? What did another say of his own responsibility? Acts 26:19. Did the apostles have to live and strive as other Christians? Phil. 3:13, 14. What then was the special object of this choice and appointment?

Verses 14, 15. What work did Jesus have in mind for the twelve? What great advantage did He give them in order to prepare them? (Acts 4:13). Can any man truly preach the gospel until he has spent time with Jesus?

Verses 16-19. What special things do we know of the first named James? Acts 12:2. Of the other James? Acts 15:13. Of Andrew? John 1:40-42. Of Philip? John 14:8, 9. Of Matthew? Matt. 9:9. Of Thomas? John 20:24-29. What did Jesus say about these men in John 17:6-12? What did He say of Judas Iscariot? John 6:64, 70, 71.

NOTES ON LESSON 6.

JESUS AND THE MULTITUDES.

Jesus attracted great multitudes, who followed him over hill and dale, but He well knew what quality these crowds were of. He was neither flattered nor imposed upon by them, (John 2:23-25). It is the same today. Vast multitudes professing Christianity; and a small residue only that truly believes and cleaves to Him. In the sixth chapter of John, a multitude is enthused over the loaves and fishes He had given them; and despite His effort to get away unobserved, many followed him to Capernaum the next day. There, however, He gave them a lesson of truth which laid bare their real attitude and heart; and not only the multitude were offended and disgusted, but many of His own disciples also, left Him. In Luke 14 great multitudes (too great) followed Him, and again Jesus gave them a lesson that tended to separate the wheat from the chaff. Jesus wants all to follow Him who will follow with a true heart; but He cares more for quality than for quantity. A dozen Christians who love Him from the heart are more to Him than thousands who merely profess and hold church-membership. Yet, among the throngs, "the Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19). The next Lord's day lesson shows what different effects the word of God had among these multitudes.

ABOUT DEMONS.

The word of God tells us much about demons, unclean spirits, demon possession, men and women who have a "familiar spirit," "necromancers" (which is literally bringers up of the dead), augurers and diviners (that is fortune tellers). These are exponents and manifestations of an evil spiritual realm, the kingdom of Satan... There is a "prince of the powers of the air," the same spiritual personage who "now worketh in (energizes) the sons of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2). He has an organized government; principalities, powers, world-rulers of this darkness; under them, spiritual hosts of wickedness (hosts, armies, of wicked spirits) in the heavenly places (the spiritual sphere), against whom the Christian is engaged in conflict. (Eph. 6:12). The devil is not omniscient, nor omnipresent, but he carries on his work by subject spirits: "his angels" (Matt. 25:41). Demons belong to his ranks and orders. To cast them out is to cast out Satan and to make a breach into Satan's realm. (Matt. 12:22-29). In Acts 16 we read of a girl who was possessed of "a spirit, a Python" (R. V. margin), and who was really able to reveal secrets. She evidently told the facts about Paul and Silas. But like his Master, Paul would tolerate no testimony and endorsement from such a source. When the evil spirit was cast out the maid could no longer tell fortunes, and her masters "saw that the hope of their gain was gone." (Acts 16:16-19). There is much humbug practiced in the lines of spiritistic phenomena, clairvoyance, fortune-telling, etc. But it is not always humbug; and where real, these occult powers proceed from demons, and from the kingdom of Satan. God's people must not dabble in such things nor experiment with them, but flee from them. (Deut. 18:9-14). The danger is terrible, and becoming greater daily. The rapidly spreading cult of "Spiritualism," with its seances and mediums is of Satanic origin. In dealing with the "spirits," men are not communicating with the spirits of departed dead, but with lying spirits, demons of the pit. The case of Samuel's appearance to the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28) was an extraordinary occurrence, which dismayed the medium herself; and the fact that Saul consulted the medium was laid to his charge as the last and crowning act of wickedness that sealed his doom (1 Chron. 10:13). In the later days of this dispensation, as the Lord's coming draws nigh, Paul says there will be demon inspired teachers who will draw many away from the faith. (1 Tim. 3:1-3). Among these must be reckoned the promulgators of Christian Science, Spiritualism, Theosophy, New Thought, and similar cults lately sprung up. Let Christians beware! Let them also shun as death itself, any recourse to clairvoyants, mediums, fortune-tellers, hypnotists; or the use of private instruments as the "planchette," or "Ouija-boards," and superstitious practices and omens, which in so far as they are effective, only open the road to the encroachment of the dark powers of the Evil one.

THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 7.

February 17, 1918.

JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES.
FOUR KINDS OF GROUND.

Golden Text: "Take heed therefore how ye hear." Luke 8:18.

Lesson Text: Mark 4:1-8, 14-20. Read Matt. 13:1-30, 36-43.

And again he began to teach by the sea side. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat, and sat in the sea: and all the multitude were by the sea on the land. 2 And he taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his teaching. 3 Hearken: Behold, the sower went forth to sow: 4 and it came to pass, as he sowed, some seed fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured it. 5 And others fell on the rocky ground, where it had not much earth; and straightway it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth: 6 and when the sun was risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. 7 And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. 8 And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. 14 The sower soweth the word. 15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; and when they have heard, straightway cometh Satan, and taketh away the word, which hath been sown in them. 16 And these in like manner are they that are sown upon the rocky places, who, when they have heard the word, straightway receive it with joy; 17 and they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway they stumble. 18 And others are they that are sown among the thorns; these are they that have heard the word, 19 and the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. 20 And those are they that were sown upon the good ground; such as hear the word, and accept it, and bear fruit, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

ed Christians? What does the word

Verses 16, 17. Does the rocky ground receive the word readily and glad-

Verse 1. When before did Jesus have to get into a boat in order to avoid the press of the crowds? (See preceding lesson).

Verse 2. In what way did Jesus teach now? What is a parable? (See notes). Had He been in the habit of teaching in parables? (See notes for answer). What two reasons are given for Jesus' teaching in parables? Mark 4:11, 12, 33.

Verse 3. What did the sower do? Can he sow the seed sitting at home? (Matt. 28:19). For what purpose did he "go forth"? Why is it necessary to sow?

Verse 4. Where did some of the seed fall? What happened to it? Is the question where the seed falls just as important as the sowing?

Verses 5, 6. Was this ground as hard on the surface as the "wayside"? Was it not just as hard a little beneath the surface? Did the seed go in very deep? Did it come to any good? When did it wither? Why?

Verse 7. What became of that which fell among the thorns? Why? When the thorns and weeds have an even start with good seed, which will get the upper hand? Which will be apt to get the upper hand under any circumstances?

Verse 8. In what sort of ground did the good seed bring forth fruit? Looking back over verses 4-8—some seed fell by what? Some on what? Some among what? Some into what?

Verse 14. Who is the sower? What is the seed? (Luke 8:11). Why does the Word have to be sown? Can there be any harvest of faith, obedience, Christian life without it?

Verse 15. Who are "they by the wayside"? Matt. 13:19. Why do they not understand" the Word? Matt. 13:15. Why does the devil snatch it out of such hearts? Luke 8:12. Does he wait very long before he snatches it? Has Satan a healthy respect for the power of the Word of God? Can that be said of men, or even of all profess-

ed God produce? Rom. 10:17.

ly? But how long only do they endure? What causes them to stumble? Must all Christians undergo that test? Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12. Who will win the crown? 2 Tim. 2:12.

Verses 18, 19. What is represented by the "thorns"? Do these things interfere with the saving power of the Word in the heart? To what extent?

Verse 20. What three things mark them "that were sown upon the good ground"? Is the good ground responsible for being good ground? Luke 8:15. In the other kinds of ground is there human responsibility implied? Is the Golden Text of this lesson of very great importance?

NOTES ON LESSON 7.

WHAT IS A PARABLE?

The parables of Jesus were simple stories used to illustrate facts and spiritual truths. All of our Lord's parables were true stories—that is they were not false, absurd, fictitious tales, but stories of things that had either happened, or might happen at any time. For example, "A sower went forth to sow," etc. This had occurred often, and is still occurring. It is true to life. So, in all His parables, Jesus represented truth by truth. In this respect His parables differ from fables. The latter are fictitious, impossible stories, not true in themselves; though they might be used to illustrate truth, as for instance Æsop's Fables. The use of a fable is recorded in the Bible. (Judges 9:7-20). Jesus never used a fable.

WHY DID JESUS SPEAK IN PARABLES?

Jesus had not thus far been in the habit of speaking in parables. He had made use of parabolic speech before this. (Mat. 5:13-15; 7:24-27). But that was incidental. Now He began to clothe His teaching generally in parables. His disciples wondered about this, and asked Him why He did it. His reason was twofold: (1) Judgment, (Mark 4:11, 12). (2) Mercy. (Mark 4:33). Strong light hurts weak eyes. It would only cause them to stumble. (1 Cor. 3:1-3).

"THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

The thirteenth chapter of Matthew shows that this parable of the Sower was given with six others in one connected discourse; and that in these parables Jesus set forth "the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven." A mystery in the Bible sense is not (as we sometimes use the word) something very deep and difficult to comprehend, but simply something hidden, unrevealed. When the mystery is revealed it may be very plain and simple; but before it was revealed it was a secret which none could know. In the parable of the Sower and the following parables Jesus divulges certain truths concerning the kingdom of heaven which up till then had been kept secret: "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 13:35). In these parables then the Lord gives His disciples new additional information concerning the long-expected kingdom.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

Owing to the rejection by Israel of their King and the King's consequent absence, the Kingdom assumes an unexpected preliminary form. It is propagated by means of seed. The seed is the word of God. (Luke 8:11). Those who become united with it by receiving it and holding it fast, (Luke 8:15), are the "sons of the kingdom." (Matt. 13:38). The seed will not be universally successful. In three of the four different kinds of ground it fails. The preached word therefore exercises a sifting, selective function in the world. God is taking out from among the nations a people for His own name. These are the "sons of the Kingdom," being the heirs. (Jas. 2:5). So that in this dispensation the kingdom does by no means sweep the world, or hold universal sway. Those who receive the word and hold it fast are called out of the world, and are not of it, though in it. They must therefore suffer (John 15:19) and they shall not be merely subjects in the glorious kingdom when it is revealed, but rulers, joint-heirs and co-rulers with Jesus Christ their Lord. (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21).

FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 8.

February 24, 1918.

JESUS TEACHING THE PARABLES.
THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM.

Golden Text: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as waters cover the sea." Isa. 11:9.

Lesson Text: Mark 4:21-34. Read Matt. 13:24-50

21 And he said unto them, Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed, and not to be put on the stand? 22 For there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested; neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light. 23 If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear. 24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you: and more shall be given unto you. 25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath. 26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth: 27 and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. 28 The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come. 30 And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth? 31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth, 32 yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches: so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof. 33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them: but privately to his own disciples he expounded all things. 20:1-6. But did the Church itself spring from a small beginning and make a rapid, unexpected growth? (Acts 1:15). For the figure of the Tree, see Dan. 4:10-12.

Verse 33. How did Jesus speak "the word" unto them? Why did He have to veil it in parables? (Comp. 1 Cor. 3:1-3). Was this a judgment as well as a mercy? (Mark 4:11, 12).

Verse 34. Does this mean that Jesus never spoke without parables, or

Verses 21, 22. Does God do anything without practical purpose? Does He expect to let His truth die in obscurity? Does He intend that any part of His word should be in vain? Or does He expect to ultimately fail in any of His undertakings? Will men always be able to hide from the searching light of God's word and truth?

Verse 23. On whom does Jesus call to hear? Have all men ears to hear? Matt. 13:15; John 8:43.

Verse 24. How do we take good care of what we hear from God? If we use it faithfully both in practice and in teaching, what will be the reward?

Verse 25. If we try to hold God's truth selfishly and do not make it bear fruit what will happen to us?

Verse 26. To what does he liken the kingdom of God? How is the start made? What is the seed? (Luke 8:11).

Verses 27-29. Did the Lord take a hand at the first seed-sowing? (Mark 16:20). After that is there any direct miraculous interference, or do things develop in natural course? But when the harvest is come does He take a hand again? Rev. 14:14-16. Is there also a sowing and reaping in the work of saving souls? John 4:35-38.

Verses 30-32. Why does Jesus use a mustard-seed to illustrate the kingdom of God? Was the beginning of Christ's work very small and insignificant? Matt. 26:31; 1 Cor. 1:26-29. What promise attaches to that little flock? Luke 12:32. Will the little flock be very much larger when Jesus comes? Luke 18:8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5. When will the kingdom fill the earth? Isa. 11:9; Dan. 7:22, 27; Rev. 11:15;

Isa. 11:9; Dan. 7:22, 27; Rev. 11:15;

only on that and similar occasion? (Comp. Mark 7:5-15 for instance). Why did He privately expound all things to His disciples? Matt. 13:10-13, 16, 17.

NOTES ON LESSON 8.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLES.

When the interested hearers with the apostles asked Jesus for the explanation of the parable of the Sower, Jesus said, "Know ye not this parable? and how shall ye know all the parables?" (Mark 4:10, 11). By this He implied, (1) That the parable of the Sower was so plain, that if they did not understand it, they might give up the thought of understanding the others; (2) That the understanding of the parable of the Sower was necessary to the proper understanding of the other parables. Jesus Himself interpreted the parable of the Sower, and with application to minute details. Likewise the next parable (as Matthew records them), the Wheat and Tares, He interpreted, as fully and carefully. (He was not afraid of the criticism of making His parables "go on all fours"! The last of the seven recorded by Matthew (the Drag-net) he likewise interpreted. The parables of the Mustard-seed, the Leaven, the Hid Treasure, the Pearl, are left uninterpreted. While they do not present too much difficulty, we cannot be as certain of their full import as of the interpreted ones. Above all things we must not impute a meaning to them that would make them clash with those the Lord interpreted. This word of caution is necessary.

"TAKE HEED WHAT YE HEAR."

While we should certainly guard against lending a listening ear to falsehood, this is not the Lord's warning in this place. The context shows that the Lord holds us responsible for quickness and readiness to hear, and for the use we make of what we have heard. He does not give us His precious truth in order that we may sink it. If we try to keep it to ourselves we shall lose it; but if we put it to good use and measure it out freely to others, in deeds and in words, we shall keep it, and more shall be added to us.

THE SEED CAST ON THE EARTH.

This parable is akin to the parable of the Sower. It describes the rise and growth of the kingdom in this age. First came the planting. In that the Lord took a direct hand, with demonstration of miraculous power. (Heb. 2:4). Then came a period of development, which goes on without direct interference. Finally when the harvest is ripe, the Sower steps in again and gathers His harvest. (Rev. 14:14-16).

THE MUSTARD-SEED.

This parable shows that the Kingdom grows out of a very small and despised beginning and issues in a thing of unexpected size. The church began very small indeed, a small and despised assembly; which however spread marvellously until not only in Jerusalem there were thousands of members, but the Gospel had spread over the known world in a comparatively short time. Who would have expected that when thirteen men met at night in an obscure upper chamber of Jerusalem, that for centuries to come thousands in all parts of the earth would celebrate the Supper which was there instituted? God's work always starts from insignificant beginnings and culminates in great things. But with the church's quick growth came also quick corruption. Already in the apostles' days it was working and breaking out in many ways and places (2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Cor. 1:12; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Gal. 1:6; Phil. 3:18; 2 Tim. 2:17, 18; Jude 4), and worse things were predicted. (Acts 20:29, 30). When in Constantine's day the professed church sprang into its career of greatest prominence and power, it also entered the deepest corruption. This growth was not a healthy growth, nor did it mark the success of God's work. In the great mass of corrupt, professing Christianity, there is found a remnant of faithful ones who will be fewer, not more, when the Lord comes. The true greatness and fullness of the kingdom appears only when the King comes and takes possession. (See references in the Questions above.)

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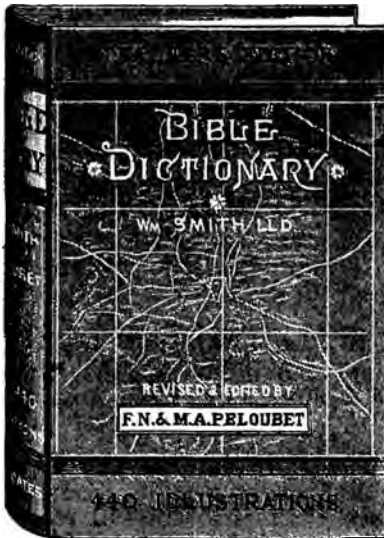
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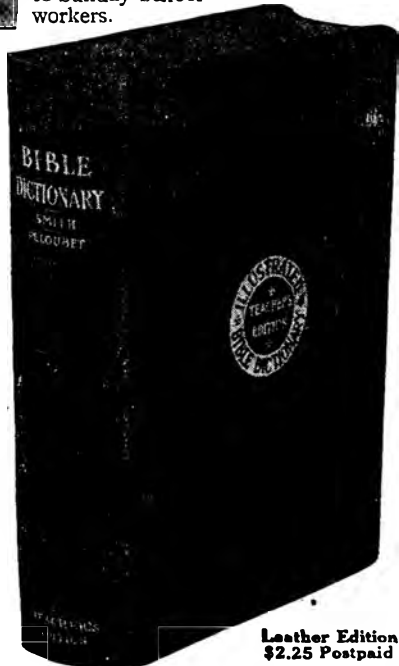
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