

# WORD AND WORK

## “HOW READEST THOU?”

It is one thing to read the Bible thro',  
Another thing to read to learn and do.  
Some read it with design to learn to read,  
But to the subject pay but little heed.  
Some read it as their duty once a week,  
But no instruction from the Bible seek;  
While others read it with but little care,  
With no regard to how they read, nor where.  
Some read it as a history, to know  
How people lived three thousand years ago.  
Some read to bring themselves into repute,  
By showing others how they can dispute;  
While others read because their neighbors do,  
To see how long 'twill take to read it thro.  
Some read it for the wonders that are there,—  
How David killed a lion and a bear,  
While others read it with uncommon care,  
Hoping to find some contradictions there!  
Some read as tho' it did not speak to them,  
But to the people at Jerusalem.  
One reads it as a book of mysteries,  
And won't believe the very thing he sees.  
One reads with father's specs upon his head,  
And sees the thing just as his father said.  
Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,—  
Hence understand but little that they read;  
For every passage in the book they bend,  
To make it suit that all-important end!  
Some people read, as I have often thought,  
To teach the Book, instead of being taught,  
And some there are who read it out of spite—  
I fear there are but few who read aright.  
So many people in these latter days,  
Have read the Bible in so many ways,  
That few can tell which system is the best,  
For every party contradicts the rest!  
But read it prayerfully and you will see,  
Altho men contradict, God's words agree.  
For what the early Bible prophets wrote,  
We find that Christ and his Apostles quote.  
So trust no creed that trembles to recall  
What has been penned by one and verified by all.

—Selected.

## WORDS IN SEASON.

"IF."

In regard to the Christian's attitude toward war, a number of queries came to us as to what we ought to do if this or if that would happen. If the government should force you to take up arms, for instance, what would you do? If a marauding band of bandits or soldiers should come pillaging, destroying, killing—what would you do? If the weak and helpless, your own wife and children perhaps, depended on you for protection, what would you do? Ah, these *ifs*! No sooner does the Lord ask us to commit our way to Him in any matter, but Satan begins to raise specters before our eyes of terrible possibilities in which the policy of "trust and obey" must needs break down. "But what *would* you do if such contingencies should arise?" It is well both to count the cost on the one hand; and on the other hand it is well to cross no bridges and climb no mountains before we get to them. Before considering all the *ifs* we must settle the question, *What has the Lord commanded us?* Did He say "Love your enemies," or "slay your enemies?" "Avenge yourselves," or "Avenge not yourselves?" "Use the sword," or "Put up thy sword?" "Render to every man evil for evil?" Decide this *first*. Then let the "ifs" come, and consider whether we are to obey only in fair weather or in storm and tempest also. I shall not fear for the answer. We are not shaping our course by the circumstances or exigencies that arise, but by truth and principle. There are people whose convictions are so elastic that they think under certain circumstances it would be all right to lie, to steal, or to do almost anything else the Lord has forbidden when the situation demands it. Shall we be found in their ranks in that Day?

### THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE.

It must be observed, however, that God does not leave us without comfort or help in times of trouble. (Ps. 46:1). The Christian's spiritual weapons are not so weak as the faithless Christian and the unbeliever imagine. The prayers of a righteous man can turn the course of nations, and are mightier protection than forts and guns. Moreover, "The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." As for the great exigencies: we dare not say what, under pressure, we might not do—for we have scant confidence in the flesh but this we know—that God will never suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with every temptation make a way of escape; and that His grace is sufficient for us; and that we can do all things, and if need be suffer all things, through Him that strengtheneth us, and I judge that that is a better confidence than rifles and swords.

### COMPULSION TO SIN.

And if the government compel us? I don't think our government will at all do that. But if any human powers should attempt it, they would accomplish just what Nero or Diocletian, or

what Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar accomplished by such attempts: they could make *some* desert from their faith, and they could make *some* suffer; they could make no man *sin* against his will. When the alternative of worshipping the golden image, or being cast into the fiery furnace was put up to the three young Hebrews, they answered that their God, if He would, *could* deliver them; but that whether He would or not, in no case would they consider worshipping the king's image. The result of that brave stand was the glorification of God and a complete vindication of the men who dared to trust Him even unto death. And so will it always be. But as for cowards and moral weaklings, God can use them to no such honor.

#### WHAT WE OWE THE GOVERNMENT.

"There is one thing," remarked a friend, "that I cannot get over; and that is that we should live in a country and get the benefits of its government and enjoy its protection, and then refuse to fight for it in the time of need." In answer to which it is sufficient to say that our obligations to a benefactor cannot go so far as disobedience to the God who is the one great Benefactor, Law-giver, and Judge, to whom we belong, whose rights over us are first and absolute. We owe the government respect, honor, obedience, customs, taxes. We render to every man his due; to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, to God the things that are God's. But God's claims have the right of way always. It would be of interest to know on the other hand, how much the world's governments owe to the children of God. Was not Sodom destroyed because there were not ten righteous men in it?

#### FLOODS OF PERDITION.

We greatly fear the flood-tides of evil that are sweeping over our land today. We fear, and cannot but fear, that the God who "gave up . . . gave up . . . gave up" the Gentile world to immorality because they despised the light and truth they had (Rom. 1:19-32) will again give up the so-called Christian nations for trampling under foot a greater light. The judgments of war and famine and pestilence, are peculiarly accompanied by another sort of curse. We quote below from a publication issued by the Y. M. C. A.:

#### WILL HE COME BACK CLEAN?

"The ravages of drink among soldiers are well understood. There is good authority for the assertion that the liquors of France played a large part in the defeat of the Germans at the Marne, large quantities having been left exposed during the French retreat and the airships directed the attack against the most intoxicated points in the German advance. Thousands of our American boys will have met defeat at the hands of the 'demon drink' before they sail for France.

"Gambling is rife in the army. It requires little equipment and offers lots of excitement. Thousands of soldiers have lost every penny of their pay within twenty-four hours after getting it. This leads to borrowing at high rates on future pay. 'Lend

me a dollar and I'll pay you two next pay day' says the bankrupt soldier, while the folks at home are forgotten. Those that win are even worse off morally than those who lose.

"14,000 of the flower of Canada's youth were sent back from Europe at the end of the first eighteen months of the war incurably diseased from immorality.

"One of the great powers now at war had more men disqualified for service in the first year and a half of the war from disease due to immorality than from wounds in battle.

"Under the present army regulations providing for report of immoral sex relations one regiment of regulars had as high as 678 reports monthly out of 788 men enrolled. In numbers of volunteer regiments the number reported monthly ran above 20 per cent of the number enrolled.

"The leveling influence of army life is one of its worst perils. A man of clean habits often finds himself compelled to tent with seven other men all of whom swear, drink, gamble and consort with immoral women. He lives in an atmosphere of vileness and the likelihood is that he will "first endure, then pity, then embrace" the vices of his environment. The shamelessness of the excesses of the soldier is in part due to the loss of feeling of identity among so many thousands in uniform. Men stand in line before a saloon bar and even before houses of prostitution that would not be seen in a questionable locality at home.

"Saloons, gambling dens and houses of prostitution are always built just as near camp lines as the government will allow. The forces of evil mobilize just as promptly and efficiently as the forces of the Government."

With the present massing of soldiers in the camps, what will it mean to our youth? And to our homes? And to the rest of the nation? Various organizations are doing valiant work to impede the flood-tide of moral evil, and the government itself tries to prevent. But unless God helps I tremble for the outcome. Let us turn to Him with tears and supplication.

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## ON THIS MONTH'S CONTENTS.

Among our contributed articles this month we would call special attention to the note struck by J. N. Gardner in his "Reasons and *The Reason*." He shows with power that after God has spoken on any matter it is not in order for us to judge that matter on its own merits. \* \* \* Whatever J. E. Boyd writes is worthy of more than one reading. He is always clear, strong, short, to the point, and he has spiritual vision. \* \* \* H. N. Rutherford has an excellent and timely article in this issue on "Things that cannot be Shaken." The Word and Work rejoices to be the medium for presenting and spreading abroad such treasures of truth.

## THOUGHTS WORTH WHILE.

D. H. F.

In a sermon in 1882 Mr. Spurgeon said: "When we, first of all, began to break bread on every first day of the week, I heard some say that they thought that the coming so often to the table might take away the impressiveness of the holy feast. Well, I have scarcely missed a Sabbath now these twenty years, and I never was so impressed with the solemnity and sweetness of the Master's Supper as I am now. I feel it to be the fresher every time. When it was once a month I had not half the enjoyment in it, and I think that where friends have the communion once a quarter or once a year, as in some churches, they really do not give the ordinance a fair opportunity to edify them.

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When Gladstone visited Naples, the authorities, wishing to show him special honor, arranged an excursion to visit Pompeii, and, without consulting him, chose Sunday for the trip. The papers announced that Gladstone and his party would go by special steamer on Sunday to an excavation at Pompeii, and this was telegraphed to all countries. But when the hour came this truly great man was found in his regular place with the people of God, and he did not visit Pompeii until Tuesday.

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Disagreeable Sundays sift churches as honestly as the test of lapping water sifted the ten thousand troops under Gideon. Those who really want to go to God's house on a wet or wintry Sunday, confess that all the trash of skeptics, from Renan down to Ingersoll, does not inspire such misgivings for Christianity as are awakened by the spectacle of delinquent Christians in bad weather.—*Cuyler*.

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The early Christians looked for the second coming of their Lord from heaven, to release His people from the sorrows of earth and the helplessness of death, and take them home with Himself to reign in everlasting bliss. As the *time* of His second advent was carefully concealed, they thought it might be in their own day, and in all their sorrows and tribulations looked up to the heavens from which they hoped to witness His descent, and daily cried, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth, and its pleasures and excitements gained but little hold on their attention or sympathy. The church, like a bride, waited the return of her Lord, and preserved the posture of expectancy. Their citizenship, their hearts, their prayers, their dreams, their hopes, all entered "within the veil," and, anchored to the everlasting throne, they outrode the storms of Time, and watched through its dark, tempestuous night, until the day should dawn and the day-star arise in their hearts.—*Isaac Errett*.

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

We receive some curious and interesting answers to the expiration notices we send to all whose subscription has expired. A very few take our notice as a "dun" and resent it; others complain if we do not notify them when time is out—as we always mean to do. One friend renewed thus: "Give me a dollar's worth." Another, "Please cancel subscription to Word and Work—a splendid paper"! One brother writes: "Good soul food in Word and Work;" another, "Much in little." And another, "Accept this dollar. The paper is worth many times the price." Frankly, we prefer almost *any kind* of response to none at all; and we are happy that our readers not only renew for the most part, but that they are volunteer agents everywhere, sending in the names of others.

One sister says, "It is the one paper I feel I could not do without." Another friend writes, "I would rather do without a good Sunday dinner than to miss a copy of Word and Work."

H. F. Slater enclosed this with his renewal: "Word and Work Magazine is a production which should be exceedingly helpful to anyone truly interested in Bible study. I have now read its contents each month for one year. Sometimes I have thought a single copy well worth the price for a whole year."

"How can you do it," say our friends, "With the tremendous increase in print prices, and without entering the advertising syndicate; how do you furnish Word and Work at 75c—50c in clubs?" We do it by means of the willing gifts, large and small, which the Lord stirs His children here and there to send our way; and by means of the loving service which every editor renders—"without money and without price." Is it not a small thing then that *you* should co-operate by sending us your book orders, etc.?

From Horse Cave, Ky: "Meeting continues with increasing interest. Ten added to date. Olmstead is preaching the Gospel of God's grace with power. Pray for us." D. H. Friend.

R. H. Boll will conduct meetings in Maine throughout July.

Write us about Church supplies; communion services, baptismal suits, contribution envelopes and racks, tuning forks, maps, anything.

L. A. Waddell reports good growth in the Bible classes at Brinkley, Ark.

E. L. Jorgenson will begin a Gospel meeting at Spearfish, S. D., July 8th.

Charles Neal kindly furnished us a quantity of his book, "Twenty Lessons on the Kingdom," at such a rate that we can send out for a limited time, ten copies, prepaid for \$1.00; or 25 copies prepaid for \$2.00. The price each is 25c.

"Brother Johnson's appeal for funds for Amite, La., is a worthy one. Gifts should be sent to him there." Stanford Chambers.

We are prepared to handle all kinds of printing and binding at reasonable rates.

Just a few volumes of the '16 Magazine remain. A few may be had at \$1.00 each.

The Boyd-Sanders mission meeting at Valley Grove, Ala., resulted in three baptisms. Their Andalusia meeting is progressing with good interest.

Brother Boll's "Reply to a Criticism," page 303, deserves an extra reading.

J. H. Hines reports three added to the One Body in a short meeting at Gee, Ky.

W. J. Campbell and C. C. Merritt are now laboring together in tent work in Iowa.

We shall be glad to furnish catalogues of Revised Version Bibles upon request.

Brother and Sister J. A. Brittell have moved to Pine Bluff, Wyo., on the main line of the Union Pacific Railway, west. It is their desire to call out from the world a band of believers for the worship of God. Brethren there should inquire for Brother Brittell, at the Brittell and Baker Garage.

We purchased from the publishers their last lot of Popular Hymns No. 2, in the flexible binding, and we have thirty copies left. Those using that book have this last opportunity of replenishing their stock.

From Stanford Chambers: "Please state again that I am in need of Word and Work for April, 1914; 20c worth of tracts to all who send me that issue, 1129 Seventh street, New Orleans. Put name and address of sender on wrapper."

The usual all-day meeting, with "dinner on the ground," is to be held at Potter Childrens' Home, Bowling Green, on July Fourth. Friends from everywhere are wanted and welcome.

## NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

Observation shows a lot of sloth in spiritual affairs. Church members by the thousands constantly apply the above principle to their "secular" work to whom it seems never to have occurred that they should apply it to their "Father's business." Isn't it strange when we stop to think about it? Conformed to this world and untransformed as to the next! What shall it profit a man if he gain his soul at the expense of his business! Seek ye first, last and all the time the things needful for the body and "the kingdom of God and his righteousness" will be "added unto you"! "A man's life consisteth in the abundance of the things he possesseth! "Present your bodies" a sleepy, wearied sacrifice while the spiritual services are being rendered, for more than this were unreasonable! It may pay to read those Scriptures again. Here is a translation from modern life:

"And the multitude of them that professed were of hard heart and stony soul, and everyone said that all the things which he possessed were his own; and they had all things in the fashion. And with great power they gave witness to the attractions of this world and the love of gold, and great selfishness was upon them all. And there were many among them that lacked love, for as many as were possessors of lands bought more, and sometimes gave a small part thereof for the public good, so their names were heralded in the newspapers, and distribution of praise was made to everyone according as he desired."

Now turn and read Acts 4:32—5:11. Also read Luke 12:16-21 and 16:19-31. Eph. 4:28 is very appropriate in these days. There was a Mr. Reynolds of Peoria, Ill., of whom it was said, "His business is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and he packs pork to pay expenses." "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord." "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This is a sure cure for spiritual sloth and will make us "*fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*"

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## THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM.

What is there in the Acts that justifies identifying the church with the kingdom? Paul confirmed the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 11:22). Is there any confusion there about the church and the kingdom? Did not the disciples already belong to the church, and was it not steadfastness under persecution which should enable them finally to enter into the kingdom of God?—A. W. Higbee in *Christian Standard*.

## CORRECT VIEWS.

(AN EXHORTATION.)

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

It is generally conceded that life holds many mysteries. The universe itself is frequently spoken of as a riddle, man as an enigma, life as a maze. The problem of sin and evil has engaged the deepest thought of the world's profoundest minds throughout the centuries. The knowledge of God which was regarded by the holy men of old, as being "too high for me," has been the object sought by the wisdom of the world. The "assured results" of this magnificent outlay of mental energy have been meager and on the whole unsatisfactory, and by no means a small amount has been absolutely detrimental to the highest welfare of the race.

The varied and abstruse conclusions reached by human research along these lines, have themselves proved to be as great riddles as the things they propose to unfold, and it is just here that the man of faith feels that he has an incomparable advantage over the wisdom of the world, because he has One through whose eyes he is willing to view all things. He accepts without question Christ's revelation of God, the world, life, man, sin, the Scriptures and eternity.

The credentials of Christ are sufficiently strong for us to accord Him the place which He Himself claims to occupy, as the Revealer of God and human life. His works, His life, His character, His teaching are not only unique but divine. Add to this the unimpeachable testimony of His resurrection from the dead and His credentials are perfect. All attempts to view the great questions of life, its source and destiny which do not recognize both the primary and absolutism of Jesus Christ, ignores the credentials of Jesus and turns to those who possess none of them. In the attitude which we take toward the Scriptures it must either be that of Christ or the critics. Shall He or they give us our views of their authority, inspiration and power? Shall it be He or the evolutionist who shall give us our ideas of the value of human life; yea, every human life? Through whose eyes shall we view the problem of sin and God's attitude toward it? Shall it be through the eyes of Him who spoke as never man spake or through the eyes of some Hegel or Eddy or Russell? And what shall be our view of the present world, its condition, its spirit, its destiny? That of the philosophers of the school of human optimism, or of Him who said of it, "Its works are evil," "Be not of it," "Its end is a harvest?" Lastly, shall we rely for our knowledge of God upon any member of that race of whom it hath been said, "No man hath seen God at any time," or upon Him of whom it hath been testified, "He hath declared Him"? It is a question of who holds the credentials. Are they accredited unto

us by any such remarkable evidences as His? If not, "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve."

"I am the Bread of life."

"I am the Light of the world."

"I am the good Shepherd."

"I am the door."

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

"I am the True Vine."

"I am He" (the Messiah).

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also."

"I and my Father are one."

"The word I speak shall judge you."

"Destroy this temple and . . . I will raise it up."

"I will give you rest."

"Moses said . . . but I say."

"All authority hath been given unto me."

These are some of our Savior's own claims. Either they are true or He was an insane egotist or else a wicked deceiver. The credentials of His life, character, teaching, works, and resurrection give full faith and credit to his testimony concerning Himself. It is then to Him that men must go for all correct views concerning life's great verities. With Peter we must say, "Thou hast the words of eternal life."

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### DYING WORDS OF UNBELIEVERS.

"Give me more laudanum that I may not think of eternity and what is to come."—*Mirabeau*.

"I am abandoned; I shall die and go to hell. I am forsaken by God and man."—*Voltaire*.

"While I lived I provided for everything but death; now I must die and I am unprovided to die."—*Caesar Borgia*.

"Stay with me, for God's sake; I cannot bear to be left alone." "I would give worlds if the Age of Reason had never been written."—Last words of Tom Payne, the popular infidel who died drunk and swearing.

Sir Francis Newport, rising on his elbow when dying, exclaimed: "Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell! Oh, eternity forever and forever!"

"Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and feel there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."—*Sir Thomas Scott*.

"I am taking a feaful leap in the dark."—*The English atheist and philosopher, Hobbs*.

"I would gladly give 30,000 pounds to have it proved there is no hell."—*Charteris*.

"O my poor soul, what will become of thee? Whither wilt thou go?"—*Cardinal Mazarin*, prime minister under Louis the Fourteenth.

## JESUS' TEACHING ON PRAYER.

(Outline.)

E. L. J.

Jesus prayed much: at baptism, transfiguration, Lazarus' grave, in Gethsemane, after feeding the five thousand, "a great while before day," "all night," etc.

Jesus emphasized *secret* prayer, God hearing and rewarding. Mt. 14:23, Lk. 9:18, Mt. 26:36. Note the words "alone," "apart," "yonder."

Jesus taught *persistence in prayer*. Lk. 11:5-13; 18:1-8. While he forbade *vain* repetitions he invited urgent, insistent, persistent, solicitous, "troublesome" prayer.

Jesus taught that we are to *move God in prayer*. Mt. 9:38.

Jesus taught that true prayer involves *confession* of our own sins and *forgiveness* of the sins of others. Mk. 11:25; Mt. 5:44, Lk. 18:9-14.

Jesus encouraged *special definite* prayer for special definite objects. Mt. 18:19, 20. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask." Mk. 9:29; Lk. 18:41; "what wilt thou"?

But Jesus desired that the answer might come in *God's way*. Mt. 26:39. "If possible, let this cup pass: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Jesus taught that prayer must be in *faith*. Faith, not only that God can, but that God will, answer: Mk. 11:24.

Jesus taught that prayer must be made in *His name*; John 15:7; 16:23, 24. Consider what it means to pray in Jesus' name. Is it not more than to say it just before the "Amen."

It is a strange notion some people have, that praying and working are opposed to each other. "O it's very well to pray, but you have to do your part; you have to work too." Well, whoever said you did not? Those who pray most are those who work most. And their work has a meaning and quality about it that makes it count. Those who emphasize praying believe in working; but they aim to work rapport with God. There is a sense in which praying is working (even faith is called a work, Jno. 6:29). The fact is, prayer is so much a work that most Christians are too lazy to pray. I doubt if any one thing is diminishing prayer-volume so much as this downright laziness. Prayer takes mental concentration and spiritual energy, more than most people will give. Prayer is work that tells tremendously; for by it great forces are set in motion; forces that accomplish what human toil can never bring about.

## REASONS AND THE REASON.

• J. N. GARDNER.

Many seem to think, if a plausible excuse can be advanced in favor of a proposition, that proposition is correct or at least not greatly incorrect. This is not true. A plausible apology can be made for almost any proposition. In this article I shall try to give a few illustrations of this.

When the serpent met the woman in the garden he began to show why she should eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He gave three excellent reasons why the fruit should be eaten. It was good for food. It was a delight to the eyes. It was to be desired to make one wise. The serpent advanced all of these arguments and they were all true. So why should Eve not eat of this fruit? On the Negative side of the question there was only one argument, but it was worth more than a world full of arguments on the other side. That argument was the prohibition of God. There were at least three reasons why the woman should eat, but God had said she should not and that should have caused the woman to decide in favor of the negative side of the question. Unfortunately it did not, and Eve by her wrong decision brought sin to herself, sorrow to the world, and death to the Son of God.

In these days men make plausible arguments in favor of infant baptism. Is not the thought of consecrating a newborn child to the service of the Lord by a religious ceremony a beautiful one? Who can say a word against this? The only thing to be said is that God in formulating the system by which men should worship Him did not include infant baptism in that system. And that means that one who would honor God on this point must not practice infant baptism, regardless of the things which may be said in favor of it.

Numerous things can be said in favor of instrumental music in worship. A piano or a pipe organ has a sweet tone, it is pleasant to the ear, it may produce tender feelings in the hearts of the listeners, and often is a real aid to the singing. But God never authorized it. He never told His people to put musical instruments into their assemblies. And to put the matter as mildly as possible, that means it is neither necessary nor important. But in spite of this the vast majority of those who advocate instrumental music will put it in the assembly even though they know division will result. In other words they will have that which is so unimportant that the New Testament is as silent as the grave in regard to it, even though they destroy the unity for which Christ prayed. Such people are not anxious to serve the Lord. They simply want to hear the tones of the instrument or else desire to take away the reproach of being peculiar.

Let us take up one more question. Considerable is being said as to whether Christians should bear arms in carnal warfare. Now a strong speech can be made in favor of taking up the sword.

Many powerful arguments can be advanced in favor of it. And as has been pointed out in the Word and Work the only real reason a Christian can advance as to why he cannot fight is that Christ has forbidden it. That reason ought to be convincing. If the New Testament had taught nothing specific on the subject its general teaching would be enough to show that a Christian cannot fight. For instance, the law of love would forbid the shooting of our enemies. But I realize there is more or less difficulty in applying general rules to specific commands. One who errs in applying general principles is not so blameworthy as one who refuses to heed specific commands. Now on this question of taking up the sword, Jesus has spoken specifically. He said to Peter, "Put up again thy sword into its place." To take up a sword has always meant to go to war. So we see that Peter was not allowed to wage war to save His Lord. But why was Peter not allowed to fight? The apologists for our going to war say it was because on that particular occasion it was not the will of God. But Jesus gave a broader reason than that. He said, "For all they that take up the sword shall perish with the sword." That simply means that Peter was not to take up the sword at that time and place because it is sinful for any man to take up the sword at any time and place. Why will any brother draw a conclusion which contradicts a plain statement of the Lord?

It is not worth while to spend much time hunting for the good or bad things which can be said for or against a proposition. It is sufficient to find God's conclusions and let matters rest at that. And this reminds me of an old fable. The fox and the cat were engaged in conversations. The fox boasted of an hundred tricks to help him in escaping dogs. The cat said, "I am not so cunning. I have only one trick. I run up a tree." Just then a pack of hounds came in sight. The cat ran up a tree and was safe. So a single statement of God's word in favor of a thought or an action is worth far more than an hundred arguments of men. It is good to be "up a tree" if that tree is the word of God. Up that tree we are safe from Satan.

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### THE TRIBE OF ERASMUS.

On the background of the sixteenth century stand out in bold relief two colossal personalities—Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther. They stand out in strong contrast. With the fascinating features of Luther's personality the public is familiar. Humanity loves to keep them in sight. They inspire to moral heroism. When dragged, at Worms, before the most august and imposing assembly Europe had ever known, including the emperor Charles V., master of the continent, the Pope's legates, archbishops, bishops, princes, dukes, electors, foreign ambassadors—when thus overawed and commanded to recant—he gravely said: "Here I stand. I can not do otherwise. God

help me! Amen!" When his friends tried to dissuade him from going to Worms, predicting for him the fate of Hus at Constance, he said: "Though Hus was burned, the truth was not burned." And when they tried to stop him on the way he exclaimed: "I shall go to Worms, though there be as many devils there as tiles on the roofs!"

But Erasmus? Stand him beside Luther. We can see each better in the light of the other. When Erasmus was accused of being a friend and helper of Luther, he tried to exculpate himself, even to equivocation and prevarication. When rallied for it, he said: "I have no inclination to die for the truth. If trouble comes, I shall imitate Peter." He declared himself ready "to sacrifice part of the truth for the sake of the unity of the church." Just as if unity could ever be secured by such means! The tribe of Erasmus is not extinct. It is still numerous and strenuous after four hundred years, and the members bear these hereditary marks of their ancestor:

1. Erasmus was inordinately vain in his scholarship. He and the other scholars of the time formed a mutual-admiration society, of which he was chief. Some of the tribe pronounced him "a divine being." When he declared the moral element in Christianity to be more important than the doctrinal, they assented in chorus. When he set the classics above the Scriptures, they set the classics above the Scriptures. When he exclaimed, "The Reformation is a calamity which has brought ruin to letters," they prolonged it into wailing echoes.

2. Erasmus was shocked, scandalized, horrified, at Luther's "virulent controversies;" they caused "quarrels to prevail everywhere." So, of course, were the other *humane* Humanists. How it must have soothed them when their chief, so "sweet-spiritedly," criticised Luther and his "set of men so hypocritical and abusive, such liars and sycophants, so offensive and seditious, such madmen and ranters," and declared that if they knew of any city in which he should be free from them, he would go at once! Nothing but "scholarship" can sterilize such language of "virulence," as we can see even in our day.

If not willing to secure peace and unity at any price, Erasmus was willing to sacrifice truth and liberty for them. He begged Luther "not to write anything against the Pope," and "not to do *anything* to disturb the peace of the church;" to submit to the authority of the Pontiff, and thus "gain the glory of obedience." As is his tribe today, he was eager for any scheme of federation, comprehension, interdenominationalism, or "Truce-of-God" muzzle which would make a semblance of unity.

Erasmus and Luther! Philip Schaff has recorded the verdict of history concerning them: "Erasmus followed maxims of worldly wisdom; Luther, sacred principles and convictions. Erasmus was a trimmer and time-server; Luther, every inch a moral hero."—*Christian Standard*.

## DR. BRENTS ON THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

A REPLY TO A CRITICISM.

R. H. B.

In one of our weeklies a good brother refers to an extended quotation from Dr. Brents' sermon on the Millennium which a good while back appeared in the *Word and Work*. We made it plain *in that same issue* (p. 151. *Word and Work*, 1916) and in several subsequent issues that we do not claim agreement in every point with the writings on prophetic themes we have published from the pens of such men as Alexander Campbell, Moses E. Lard, Prof. Milligan, Dr. Brents, J. A. Harding and others; but while we agree with them in many points, our aim was rather to show how free such men felt to handle, discuss, and teach on the topics of the Second Coming, the Millennium, the Restoration of the Jews, the First Resurrection, etc., and that no one of their day, so much as dreamed of branding them as speculators, dividers, heretics, etc., or attempted to destroy their work and influence. In the special point quoted below I would certainly side with Dr Brents. I take this from my brother's quotation of Dr. Brents:

"We have seen that the dead in Christ rise first, and that this is the first resurrection, in which none but the blessed and holy will have part. 'On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.' The phrase, first resurrection, clearly implies a second resurrection, for there cannot be a first without a second. So does the phrase, 'dead in Christ,' imply that there are dead who are not in Christ; and the sentence, 'the dead in Christ shall rise first,' implies that the dead out of Christ will rise afterwards. How long afterwards? 'But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.' (Rev. 20:5). This clearly implies that the rest of the dead will live again when the thousand years shall be finished. We see not how to resist these conclusions from the premises, or from the scriptures quoted. They are plain statements of holy writ, which seem to admit of no other interpretation. It seems to us that the conclusions must be admitted, or the truth of the Scriptures denied."

Regarding this point our brother comments thus:

"Now, some questions present themselves to my mind just here that need explanation. Over whom are these righteous reigning now for a thousand years? Not over the wicked, for he says they are all dead. Now I care not whether Dr. Brents or some other wrote this; he certainly dug a pit and fell in it. The righteous are reigning with Christ for a thousand years; but who are living to be reigned over? 'The wicked are all dead,' he says, "and will not be raised till the thousand years are passed." There are none to reign over—all kings and priests, and no subjects. See what a trap he sprung on himself?"

At the close of his review we find this paragraph:

"I want to ask these millennialists [by which term he no doubt means the brethren of the *Word and Work*] a question or two. Do I have to believe that Christ will come again and reign on the earth in person for a thousand years? And do I have to believe in two separate resurrections a thousand years apart? Then what shall I do with the plain teaching of Jesus in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew? These will not harmonize at all with your teaching on this millennium question. Also,

what can I do with Paul's description in 1 Thess. 4:17? Have I got to believe what you teach or be lost? If you say no, then I ask, why are you crowding upon the churches a nonessential, to the dividing and destruction of many hitherto good working congregations? A nonessential? If you say yes, then I ask that you explain the language of Jesus spoken in relation to his second coming. If you cannot harmonize your teaching with these scriptures to which I call your attention, I must be allowed to follow Jesus rather than you."

To these things we wish to reply:

1. That no man who takes the scriptures in their simple import ever digs a ditch or springs a trap for himself by so doing. The Jew who in the days before Christ insisted upon taking the prophecies concerning Christ at their simple value may have seemed to be getting himself into a dilemma: for how could the Christ be God's Son, a glorious Ruler, and yet despised and rejected, led as a lamb to the slaughter? But it was all strictly true, nevertheless. The man who twists, stretches, and mutilates the Word of God in order to harmonize it to human conception, is in the same bad business with Uzzah, of raising an unhallowed hand to help God out. He both digs a ditch for himself and for others.

2. The parts of the word of God which do not bear *directly* upon the steps of salvation and every day's practical duty are not therefore "non-essential," in the sense of being indifferent and unimportant, to be discarded at the beck or frown of whoever does not relish them. All the word of God is worthy of all honor, is *profitable* also, not for private study only, but for teaching also. Why should we expurgate the Bible?

3. The brethren who are here accused of "crowding upon the churches a non-essential to the dividing and destruction of many hitherto good working congregations," declare that they have never either crowded anything upon any individual or congregation, nor have they ever been instrumental in either destroying or dividing *even a few*, of either good-working or feeble and poorly-working congregations. Such a thing has not been done by us in any instance. And even when some enemies and opposers tried to trouble and divide some churches on these issues in order to have somewhat to charge against us, they did not succeed in any single instance.

Now the brother who wrote these things is known to us by reputation as a good man indeed. No sooner therefore will he see this repudiation we think, than he will take all trouble to investigate these things and get the facts; and as soon as he sees that he misstated these things he will at once publish a retraction in the very same paper in which he wrote those unintentional detractions. And that paper, of course, will not refuse to publish the brother's correction; for who would want to be guilty even by refusing to publish a correction, of spreading a false report against brethren in the Lord?

(The promised article about "The Abomination of Desolation" is deferred to make space for this reply.)

**THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN.**

(Heb. 12:27-29).

H. N. RUTHERFORD.

"And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken (which cannot be shaken) may remain. Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire." What majesty there is in these words! They bear the mark of Deity. It would be high-minded presumption for man to utter them; but they become the august speaker. Their original setting is even more magnificent, as we find them in the Book of Haggai: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill the house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts." (Hag. 2:6, 7).

These words were first spoken to encourage the Jewish exiles on their return from Babylon to their ruined Temple and city. The elder men wept as they thought of the departed glories of earlier days, and God comforted them, as He delights to comfort those who are cast down. "Fear ye not," said He in effect: "There is a crisis coming which will test and overthrow all material structures; and in that convulsion the outer form will pass away, however fair and costly it may be, whilst the inner and hidden glory will become more apparent than ever; nay, amid all the sounds of wreck and change, there will come the desire of all nations, the substance of which these material objects are but the fading and incomplete anticipation." The words quoted above emphatically state that some things cannot be shaken, while others must be entirely removed.

**THINGS WHICH ARE BEING SHAKEN.**

These Hebrew Christians were living in the midst of a great shaking. The Jewish tenure of Palestine was being shaken by the Romans, who claimed it as their conquest. The interpretation given to the Word of God by the rabbis was being shaken by the fresh light introduced through the words and life and death of Jesus. The first Covenant with its rituals, animal sacrifices and casuistries, was becoming old and waxing aged, and nigh unto vanishing away. The first symptoms of this shaking began when Jesus commenced to teach and preach in the crowded cities of Palestine, and all people flocked to Him. The successive throes became more obvious when the Jewish leaders sought to silence the apostles and stay the onward progress of the Church. The Book of Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles are full of evidence of the intensity of that revolution. And the climax of all came in the terrible siege of Jerusalem, when once and forever the Jewish system was shattered, the Temple burned, the remaining ves-

sels sunk in the Tiber, and Jews driven from the city which was absolutely necessary to the maintenance of their religion. The whole New Testament is witness to the throes of one of the mightiest spiritual revolutions that ever happened; as great in the spiritual sphere as the French revolution in the temporal. "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

In such a time we are living now. Everything is being shaken and tested. Old landmarks are crumbling. Venerable foundations are upheaved in a night. Thrones of nations are tottering. Political and economic safeguards go down like wooden fences before an angry sea. The customary foundations of society are shaken. Man's faith in man is shattered. A writer in a Chicago paper declares that "The very foundations of our faith in human civilization are torn up by the roots as we see this thing—this impious loathsome thing—start on its way." If this was the judgment of the newspaper writer when this impious loathsome thing called war started on its way, surely his faith in the developments of present time must not only be uprooted, but entirely obliterated. In these days, viewing things from the standpoint of the men of this age, when the unthinkable has become commonplace, the impossible has happened, and common securities have vanished, men and women are whispering the confession of the Psalmist, "My foot slippeth," circumstances certainly do present a dark picture. The present aspect to those who do not look beyond things temporal can be none other than pessimistic; for who can tell what things are coming upon us, to what these ominous times portend? Where can we find a footing? Where can we stay our souls? Amid the things temporal that must be shaken where are the eternal things that cannot be shaken? I wish to explore the Word of God, to recall some assurances in order that we may stay our souls upon them in the terrible strain and uncertainty through which we are passing, and in which we may have to live for many succeeding days.

**"THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN."**

There are a few things which cannot be shaken—God's Word. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." God's Word is the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth. "For all flesh is as grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: but the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you." (1 Pet. 1:24-26). All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of men, his opinions, his pomp and pride, as the flower of grass, beautiful, but evanescent; but the Word of the Lord shall stand forever. God's eternal Truth, shall stand the test for it is indestructible. "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again, The eternal years of God are hers." "The Words of Jehovah are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, purified seven times." (Psa. 12:6).

Let us not fear modern criticism; not one jot or tittle of God's Word shall perish; not one grain of truth shall fall to the ground; not one stone in the fortress shall be dislodged. Scripture will shake off all unjust criticism, as the Apostle Paul did the viper which fastened on his hand, and felt no hurt. Emperors have ordered its destruction, mighty bonfires have been kindled with its leaves, and those who read it have been killed, but still the Bible lives and abides. It has been ridiculed, scoffed at, bitterly denounced and mercilessly criticised. Yet it lives.

More than a hundred years ago Voltaire, the great French infidel, said: "I will go through the forest of scriptures and girdle every tree, and in one hundred years it will be an unread book." But the hundred years have passed and the very house where Voltaire sat when he made the statement is now a Bible house, and the press that printed his words now prints the Bible that he said would not be read!

George Eliot, the great novelist, said of a certain book that had just come from the press: "In fifty years that book will have destroyed the Bible." The fifty years have passed and that book is forgotten—all except George Eliot's remark—but the Bible still lives.

Some years ago Bob Ingersoll said of a certain book he wrote: "In twenty years this will crumble the creeds and man's faith in Scriptures, and the Bible will be read no more." But the twenty years are gone, and Ingersoll is gone and almost forgotten, but the Old Book lives and is sold more than any other hundred books combined. The fulfilled predictions of the past—whether threatenings like those which befell the Jews, or promises like those realized in the advent of our Lord—all confirm the certainty that "no word of God is void of power." Let us give the more earnest heed then to His invitations, warnings, threatenings, and promises, fashioning the whole course of our lives by them, and ever remembering that they are the asseverations of "the King Eternal." Thus in doing we are likened to the wise man who builded his house upon the rock where neither flood, nor storm blast shall be able to shake and remove us.

**GOD'S LOVE.**—Our friends' love may be shaken by a rumor, a moment's neglect, a change in our estate; but God's love is like Himself, immutable. Father and mother might forsake, but God never. "When my father and my mother forsake me, Then will Jehovah take me up." The love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord, is unassailable by change or shock. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 21).

**GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM.**—"Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire." We who have received the Lord Jesus in obedience of faith are in the Kingdom of the Son of God's love here and now (Col. 1.13) and in that sense we have received

God's kingdom. We are yet to enter upon another stage or development of this kingdom which is designated as the "heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:18), the "eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:11). Amid all our revolutions and political changes that kingdom is coming. It is now hidden in mystery to the world, but some day it shall be revealed in power. Just as in the case of those who were in distress, and in debt and every one discontented gathered themselves unto David in the Cave of Adullam, and he became their captain; so those who are willing to go forth unto Jesus during the time of His rejection and humiliation, bearing His reproach, being separated from the world's schemes and politics: we too, like those who were with David in his days of glory and power, shall be with Jesus. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory."

The kingdom of this world is destined to become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever. "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." It cannot be touched by any sudden attack or revolt of human passion. We shall receive "A kingdom that cannot be shaken."

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## ON REDEEMING THE TIME AGAIN.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

In our last we tried to show how by the distribution of leaflets and tracts a vast amount of missionary work can be done and at little expense: Wonder if it did any good. Wonder how many sent a contribution to Brother Janes to help him print free literature. Wonder how many more wrote him for a supply of leaflets for free distribution. Surely after printing literature Brother Janes will not have to hire some one to scatter it as though there were no servants of Christ in the land!

Do you lack conviction? Doubtful about tracts doing good? Russell didn't doubt their effectiveness. The Mormons do it. You may rest assured that the devil would not waste time, energy and money on an ineffective means. Let us be wise.

But I wish to speak particularly now concerning Word and Work, and speak too, from experience. Many, many readers of a good religious magazine never think of such a thing as to send in lists of subscribers. "Let some one else do it." Listen, dear reader, Christian brother or sister, Word and Work is a clean paper. It stands for every word of God: It is something you can safely hand out to any one to read. It does "worlds of good" and no harm. Aren't you interested in multiplying the good it does? And have you no responsibility on that line?

Hadn't really thought of that? Well, now then, begin speaking to others about Word and Work and take their subscriptions. Think of it, 48 pages a month or 576 pages a year, for 75c, or in clubs of four for 50c.! Summer months are the hardest months on publishers. Let us all put forth extra effort just now and make this summer the best. Get some to subscribe and send the paper to others, as your gift. Invest in this good soul-saving and truth-upholding work. Let each one redeem the time by doing "his bit."

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## THE PRAYER OF NEHEMIAH.

(Nehemiah 1:1-11).

J. EDWARD BOYD.

It is easy to make a show of zeal for a good cause when that good cause is in prosperous circumstances, and to identify one's self with a people many and mighty; but to be zealous in a matter which is in evil circumstances, and to be associated voluntarily and heartily with a people few and weak, despised and afflicted, requires a degree of courage which is rare indeed. Nehemiah was cupbearer to the king—a slave, but a trusted and honored one. But his personal good-fortune did not cause him to forget his less fortunate brethren or his native land; so when certain ones came from Judah he sought at once to learn from them the state of affairs there. Their answer was discouraging; the people were in great affliction and reproach, the walls of the city were broken down and the gates burned with fire—a wretched condition for the people and the city which had once been so great.

This report caused Nehemiah great sorrow of heart; forgotten were his own fortunate circumstances in the deep grief for his distressed people. Nor was it a sorrow merely for the moment; his mourning continued certain days. But often from springs of deepest distress greatest blessings flow; and out of Nehemiah's grief sprang one of the most precious and noble prayers found in God's word of truth. It is worthy of our most careful study—as well as Nehemiah's entire course, which commends itself for our special instruction. He does not spend all his energies in vain lamentations; he does not (like many who rely on the arm of flesh) make any attempt to relieve the distress of his people until he has at first made his prayer unto his God; nor does he fail to second his prayer with vigorous action when the opportunity for such action is presented. However, it is well to note that prayer held a prominent place, if not the first place; nothing was attempted without that. It was then the very best thing he could do for his suffering people. How many mistakes are made just here—good men rushing with great earnestness of purpose into this work or that, without first taking time to seek that wisdom and strength which can come only through fervent, sincere prayer to God.

"If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God—and it shall be given him."

#### THE PRAYER.

*Worship.* The prayer begins with adoration of God and contemplation of His great character as revealed in His word. He is "the great and terrible God," yet one "that keepeth covenant and loving-kindness with them that love Him and keep His commandments." A most excellent beginning it is for the prayers of all of God's people.

*Confession.* There is a deep and thorough confession of sin—"we have sinned," "we have dealt very *corruptly*." This was eminently proper, for the great national calamity was due to great national sin. Nor does Nehemiah fail to identify himself fully with his people in their sins; there is no reserve, but the deepest personal humiliation—"I and my father's house have sinned." Surely this thorough self-judgment was one great secret of the power of his prayer.

*Pleading the Promises of God.* Nehemiah was familiar with God's promises—promises which were applicable to the very distress which then prevailed. But these precious promises, instead (as some might think, reasoning that God would bring them to pass whether or no), of making him indifferent about making his requests known unto God, formed the very basis of his petitions. He pleads with God to remember His word of promise which had been given through Moses. Even so should Christians now be familiar with the many precious promises which God has made to them; to plead these promises will surely increase the effectiveness of their prayers.

*A Specific Petition.* For the accomplishment of his heart's desire, Nehemiah saw one thing needful—"mercy in the sight of this man," the king. God can influence the minds of the rulers of the earth and cause them to show favor unto His people. Nehemiah realized this; and with a petition for this special blessing he concluded his prayer. Is not this worthy of the careful consideration of Christians now, in these grievous times? Is it not timely for us to pray our Father to "grant us mercy in the sight" of the rulers of our country?

#### THE RESULTS.

Nehemiah faithfully continued his service to the king; but his saddened countenance betrayed the emotions surging within. The king's kindly inquiry, his ready and generous response to all of Nehemiah's requests, the subsequent journey to Jerusalem, and the remarkable success of the undertaking there, all illustrate the truth of the statement that "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."

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The Lord's Day, without the Lord's Supper, is the rose without the fragrance, the honeycomb from which sweetness has been extracted, the setting without the gem.—*Collis*.

# BIBLE STUDY COURSE.

R. H. B.

FIRST DAY.—Ahab. 1 Kings 16:29-34. This is the most prominent among the kings of Israel. He was distinguished in wickedness, and also by God's wonderful dealings with him and with Israel in Ahab's time. Note 16:25; but Ahab outdoes that (16:30, 33). Much of the cause lies in v. 31. Is it according to God's will that His people should enter into alliance, partnership, wedlock, fraternity-ties with those who are not of God's people? Consider 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1, "There was none like unto Ahab who did sell himself to do that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, whom Jezebel, his wife, stirred up." (21:25). With v. 34, cp. Josh. 6:26.

SECOND DAY.—*The Entrance of Elijah.* 1 Kings 17.—The prominence of Ahab is largely due to Elijah's contact. Elijah is one of the grand, solitary figures of the Bible. What was he called, and whence was he? When he faced Ahab, before what greater king did he claim to stand? Read the prophetic declaration of v. 1 in the light of 18:36, last clause. But it nevertheless involved fervent prayer. Jas. 5:17. Who shall some day have this same power? Rev. 11:3-6. Elijah's Hiding, (Vs. 2-7). What necessity? 18:10. *With the Widow of Zarephath.* (Vs. 8-24). Is it not strange that God would pick so feeble an instrument? See Jesus' reference to this. Luke 4:25: What was His point? Note the word "first" in v. 13 of our lesson. Was this a trial of faith? Did she *see* first or *believe* first? John 11:40. With v. 14 contrast Hag. 1:6, 9. Little is much with God's blessing on it; and vice versa when not.

THIRD DAY.—*Elijah faces Ahab.* 1 Kings 18:1-19. Note how Elijah always moves by God's orders. What is your estimate of Obadiah? Why was he so afraid to carry the message to Ahab? Note what Ahab called Elijah, v. 31, and Elijah's reply. The king's wrath fizzled away pitifully before the brave, faithful eye of the prophet. In v. 19 he gives Ahab orders, and Ahab obeys. *Elijah vindicates God.* (Vs. 20-40). I. The first appeal to the multitude (v. 21). Result: silence. II. The great Test. All the people agree to it. It was indisputably *fair*. The prophets of Baal could not refuse. Verses 26-29 pictures the tragedy of a false god. A distinguishing feature of the true God is given in Deut. 4:7; Ps. 65:2; contrast Isa. 46:7. Compare the few quiet words of Elijah (vs. 36, 37) with v. 28. III. The Result. Now, in view of the confession of v. 39 recall the appeal of v. 21. Am I out and out for the true God? On v. 40, read Deut. 13.

FOURTH DAY.—*The Rain.* 1 Kings 18:41-46. How did Elijah hear that sound? (v. 41). See the necessity of prayer, even when a man is working strictly in line with God's will and word. (V. 36 last clause). Read James 5:16-18. Is prayer a means

of wresting from the hands of God some blessing He is unwilling to give; or is it the means of obtaining promised blessings He is more than glad to grant? Did Elijah pray so fervently because he thought the rain was or was not coming? (v. 41). *Elijah's Discouragement*: 19:1-8. Was he following orders in v. 3? The evident failure, so far as any general results were concerned, of the great demonstration at Mt. Carmel, laid the Prophet low. Who faced a greater discouragement with nobler spirit? John 1: 10, 11. Did God let his faithful servant go in this gloom? v. 4. God is never discouraged. He moves right on through all failure to His sure success and victory. Isa. 42:4.

FIFTH DAY.—*Elijah's New Commission*. 1 Kings 16:15-18. What is the point of the question in v. 9? How greatly Elijah was disgusted and discouraged is seen in v. 10. Wind, earthquake and fire preceded the face of the Lord; all this was preliminary: the necessary dealings of God with humanity in the thunders of law and judgment and the great and terrible demonstrations of His power. In the gentle word of the Gospel He himself is found. So again in His world-dealing. After the noise and smoke of the great world-shaking is over, God's voice is heard in the silence; see Ps. 46:10 in its setting. The prophet's commission concerned three persons: one an alien who should become God's scourge upon disobedient Israel; the second Jehu who should be God's instrument of vengeance upon the corrupt house of Ahab; the third a messenger from God to succeed Elijah in time. Elijah did not know the conditions as God knew them. (v. 14 with v. 18). God has a hidden people scattered here and there. Israel is never left without a remnant. Rom. 11:1-6. God claims the faithful remnant for Himself. Mal. 3:17. Elisha's call follows first. (v. 19-21).

SIXTH DAY.—*Israel's Victory over the Syrians*. 1 Kings 20. "Not for your sake do I do this, saith the Lord Jehovah, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel." (Ezek. 36:22, 32). Compare this with 1 Kings 20:28, for an explanation of God helping Israel at this time. V. 31, the reputation of the kings of Israel. The acted parable of vs. 35-43 is striking. Note v. 40—the excuse of a false busy-ness. Many are too busy to attend to the one thing required of them. God resented a false mercy about as much as anything. (V. 42; 1 Sam. 15).

SEVENTH DAY.—*Naboth's Vineyard*. 1 Kings 21. From our point of view Ahab's proposition (v. 2) would be fair, and Naboth's refusal may seem perverse. But in Israel there was another law respecting land-ownership. Lev. 25:23; Numb. 36:7. Naboth was in the right. Ahab's conduct is that of a spoiled child, well deserving Jezebel's scorn, (v. 7). It was she that conceived and executed the devilish plot (vs. 8-14). If Ahab had not availed himself of the benefit of her foul deed he would have been guiltless; but he took the profits of it, and thus became party to the crime. God had beheld it. The message to

Ahab is terrific. At every step we see how much courage God's servants need. (Glance over Josh. 1 and Jer. 1 on this point). What did Ahab call Elijah in v. 20? Recall 18:17. Was there a word said about mercy or repentance? Yet see vs. 27-29. God's principle in this respect is set forth in Jer. 18:7-10. Comp. Jonah's message to Nineveh. Note v. 29. Can a man repent without humbling himself before God? In view of the result was Elijah an enemy (v. 20) or after all a benefactor?

EIGHTH DAY.—*"An Unholy Alliance."* 1 Kings 22.—Here we meet a new king of Judah who had arisen in the meantime. (15:24; read 2 Chron. 17 and 18.) Should such a man as Jehoshaphat have entered into compact with such a man as Ahab? 2 Cor. 6:14, etc. See what God thought about it in 2 Chron. 19:12. Make personal application. What was Ahab doing with so many prophets at his court? Why did he hate Micaiah? Does the sequel show Micaiah to have been a true and faithful man? Why did not Ahab love him like his own 400? Consider here 2 Tim. 4:3; and the next verse, which explains the teaching of 1 Kings 21:19-23. Be sure to read 2 Thess. 2:10-12. Yet the very fact that God had Micaiah to tell the whole thing shows how little He delights in the blindness of the blinded. In the end whose word stood—the one lone prophet's who spoke the truth, or the four-hundred who preached the popular doctrine?

NINTH DAY.—*Retrospect upon "First Kings."* The first two chapters are transitional: the last days of David, and the installation of Solomon as king on the throne of his father David. An attempted usurpation is quelled. From chapt. 3 to 11, Solomon's reign. Solomon's dedicatory prayer in ch. 8 is specially noteworthy. Chapter 11 gives the reasons of his failure. From chapt. 12 to the end, records of the Divided Kingdom.

TENTH DAY.—Make a list (1) of the kings of Judah (beginning with Rehoboam), whose history is recorded in this book; giving in each case the length and character of the reign; (2) of the kings of Israel (beginning with Jeroboam the son of Nebat) in like manner; (3) of God's spokesmen and prophets, giving the *name*; *to whom* each prophesied; *the theme* of the prophecy in each case; and note *the fulfillment* in each case, whether literal or figurative, loose or accurate.

ELEVENTH DAY.—In parallel columns place side by side the kings of Judah and Israel in their order, in such a way as to show which kings were contemporary.—Trace the story of the first four kings of Judah in Second Chronicles.

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#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Please address all mail (unless of a very personal nature) to Word and Work; not to R. H. Boll, or any of the other editors. Anything of interest to any of them will be passed to them just the same; but to address an individual often means delay, as he may be out of the city.

## “PROPHECIES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION.”

I have received a few letters inclosing sermons in favor of war, or in favor of preparedness with a view to war, and these sermons are usually based upon prophecies—the minister so interpreting the prophecy as to mean that war is imminent and inevitable. The error into which these ministers have fallen is due to failure to distinguish between a prophecy and the interpretation of a prophecy. It is a common mistake into which many fall, to give to an uninspired interpretation the force to which only an inspired prophecy is entitled. One can admit that the prophecies of holy writ are inspired without conceding infallibility to those who so interpret them as to find their fulfillment in the present age. A minister ought to be the last to claim for his interpretation any more weight than he himself would give to an opinion of another minister who interprets the prophecy differently. These interpretations are sometimes dangerous, because when a man once convinces himself that his interpretation is correct, he then follows his own opinion as if it had all the binding force of prophecy, and in so doing he may paralyze his Christian usefulness. Suppose, for instance, a minister construes a given prophecy to mean that at this time there is to be a universal war, and that the United States is to play an important part in it. If he is convinced that his interpretation is correct, he is not only useless as an advocate of peace, but he becomes dangerous to peace. Accepting war as inevitable, he becomes an advocate of preparedness, and, if he has any influence, he may, by helping to engender a military spirit, bring about the very wars which he predicts.

The safer plan—is it not the Christian plan?—is to accept the teachings of Christ as a means of preventing war and then apply them, having faith that they will have the effect that Christ promised. If war is to come, let no Christian be responsible for it by a misinterpretation of prophecies, or by lack of confidence in the power of God to employ love and Christian service for the prevention of war.—W. J. Bryan, in *The Commoner*.

### REPLY.

There is one good point in the above article from the pen of Mr. Bryan: Any professed follower of Christ who advocates war has certainly left the trail of light and is walking in darkness (John 8:12). But as for the rest of it—did we see aright? Is it really W. J. Bryan that wrote this thing? If it were not for the signature one might surmise that it was from one of the many modern preachers who object to the scriptures (prophecy and all) having any definite meaning whatever. Interpretation? If by that is meant fictions and fantasies imposed upon an excuse of scripture-language, he chose the wrong word: that is not *interpretation*, and that sort of thing is not to be defended or considered. But if he means the plain import of the language God uses, we take issue with him. If we cannot by careful adherence to God's infallible word arrive at truth, there can be no certain standard of truth for us, and the sects are right in saying that we have only a variety of “views,” any one of which a man may feel free to adopt; or else the Roman church is right when it claims that the infallible Word is no authority except in the hands of an infallible interpreter. Let us not attack a man's right and ability to take God at what He says; and if exception is taken to his “interpretation,” let it not be to discount and discredit “interpretation” in general, but to point out to him in what particular he has departed from the plain significance of the words of God

—with other words in what particular he has really departed from the interpretation of God's word to roam in mental paths of his own. If the latter were Mr. Bryan's charge, it would be good.

But it develops (as often it does in the case of those who cry aloud against "interpretation") that it is the plain and unmistakable meaning of the prophetic word he seems to object to. For the word of God tells with no uncertain voice that the age shall and must end in unparalleled disasters, among which world-wide wars, unprecedented bloodshed, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, and terrific judgments. I take it that God meant those things. We can be sure that we are now face to face with just such things as God has predicted. Whether this is to be the final and complete catastrophe is not yet manifest.

And if a man declares that (so far as the world is concerned) wars are inevitable—does he therefore become useless as an advocate of peace, and does he become a fosterer of preparedness, armaments, and militarism? What an inference! If for example Paul declares that divisions among professed Christians are inevitable (1 Cor. 11:19) he therefore becomes useless as an advocate of Christian unity, and becomes an advocate of the sectarianism he so strongly condemns? (1 Cor. 1:10-13). Or if the Lord Jesus says that "occasions of stumbling" will inevitably come and continue (Matt. 18:7)—is He therefore henceforth useless as an advocate of righteousness? We must beg pardon for the very suggestion.

The teachings of Christ were not intended to set the world straight, as Mr. Bryan thinks, but call men out of the world to be a select, separate company, bought with blood, indwelt by the Spirit. This sanctified body alone must and can follow His directions in regard to all manner of living. Nor will they, if they understand their Shepherd's voice aright, under any circumstances array themselves against their fellowmen to slay, or help to slay, to make a brother's wife a widow, or his children orphans.

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### THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Whence but from Heav'n, could men unskilled in arts,  
 In several ages born, in several parts,  
 Weave such agreeing truths? or how or why  
 Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?  
 Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,  
 Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.

Then for the style; majestic and divine,  
 It speaks no less than God in ev'ry line:  
 Commanding words, whose force is still the same,  
 As the first fiat that produced our frame.

—John Dryden, 1631-1700.

## THE ORDER OF THE STAR OF THE EAST.

PHILIP MAURO.

(For the first half of this article, see the June issue.)

### WILL KNOW HIM.

Nor will those who have rejected Him need any schooling in order to be able to recognize Him; for to them He will be manifested in all His glory and majesty, accompanied by *the angels of His power, in flaming fire* taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:7, 8). In that day the Lord of Glory will not plead with men for a cordial reception, nor will He humbly crave "a fair hearing." They will be *compelled* to hear Him; "for the Lord shall *cause* His glorious Voice *to be heard*, and shall show the lightning down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire" (Isa. 30:30). "Our God shall come and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above and to the earth, that He may judge His people" (Psa. 50:3). "Whose Voice then shook the earth; but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. 12:26). In that day those who have rejected Him will not be calmly sitting as judges of His "teaching," but will be calling upon the rocks to fall upon them and to hide them "from the Face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. 6:14-17).

We see, then, that the description which the pamphlet gives of the coming of the "Supreme Teacher" is as different as possible from that which the Bible gives of the Coming of God's Son from heaven. This point is very important.

3. The pamphlet further says: "The dawning age is one of Brotherhood. The great Teacher Himself comes to inaugurate this age." The promise is that the teaching of this coming One will gradually commend itself to the acceptance of men; and that the Order of the Star in the East will, by constant expansion, eventually embrace the whole world. For it is declared that the Order is the beginning of a "world-wide organization," which will spread over every country, religion, race, and community. "finding its centre in a common Figure, and that Figure the mightiest of all Figures . . . the Supreme Teacher of God and men." "Round that Figure," we read, "the Order is already gathering." Here we have another expression of that great Idea which has possessed the Modern Mind, namely, the idea of a vast, all-embracing organization or Federation of Man. (See *The Number of Man*, by the Author.)

### THE JUDGE.

Although the Order originated in the Theosophical Society, it is expressly stated that it is not exclusively a Theosophical Order, but is intended to include all who share the common hope for,

and belief in, the near coming of a mighty Teacher, *no matter to what faith, creed or school of thought* they may belong. Repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are not necessary for membership in this Order, and for a share in "the common hope" which it confesses. By this it is certain that the Potentate they are expecting is not the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Son of God is not coming to *teach* the world, but to *judge* the world. His mission will be, not to instruct the nations, but "*to rule them with a rod of iron.*" In that day of His power there will issue out of His Mouth, not precepts for the guidance of the nations that have long rejected Him, but "a sharp sword that with it He should smite the nations;" and in that day His arrows shall be sharp in the heart of the King's enemies (Rev. 19; Psa. 45, etc.).

4. Enough has already been said to show how those who accept the "Declaration of Principles" of this new Order, will be completely deceived and thrown off their guard as to the circumstances that will attend the coming again of the Lord Jesus. But the great Deceiver has a more terrible object than that to accomplish. His aim is not merely to *mislead* men as to the manner of the Second Coming of Christ, but to *prepare them to accept the Antichrist*, "whose coming is AFTER THE WORKING OF SATAN." The "Declaration of Principles," and the other things contained in the pamphlet, and in the lectures given by Mrs. Besant (which are largely attended), are well calculated to prepare the minds of men to receive, and bow to the authority of "that Wicked One, the Son of Perdition." This is the reason for the emphasis laid upon "recognizing" and "showing reverence" to *human greatness*. (See Clause 6 of the Declaration of Principles). Note carefully the following and similar exhortations contained in the pamphlet: "Reverence greatness wherever you see it." "Oh, cultivate reverence, although it be against the common feeling of the time." "When you are able to feel reverence, then, do not put a check on the love that flows out to that which you see to be greater than yourself; but nourish the feeling of devotion," etc. "If any of you would fain be among those who, on seeing Him will leave all and follow, then cultivate that feeling in your daily life." It is easy to see how such instructions as these serve to prepare the way for the "Man of Sin," who will demand the worship of his fellows, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped (2 Thess. 2). All this is clearly in preparation for the fulfillment of that which is written: "And all the world wondered after the Beast." "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13).

#### CRAFTY LEADERS.

5. It is especially to be noticed that the Instigator of the new Order has, with consummate craftiness, laid hold of those very qualities, "Devotion, Steadfastness and Gentleness," which

Christ enjoined upon His own disciples, but which they have, to a great extent, neglected. The great Deceiver has accordingly enjoined the cultivation of those qualities as a fitting preparation for association with "the great Teacher, when He comes." In pressing this part of the Declaration of Principles, Mrs. Besant boldly uses the name "Christ," saying, "If you would know the Christ when He comes, cultivate the spirit of the Christ—to bear insult with forgiveness, to bear accusation in silence, to refrain from anger, not to return evil with evil, but with good. And if in yourselves you can develop those Christlike qualities, then shall your vision be clear to recognize Him when He comes." "If you would know the Christ when He comes, try to develop in yourself, not only that gentleness and patience, but all the qualities that go to the making of the spiritual man."

This is surely a specimen of "the depths of Satan." Let it be borne in mind that the foregoing exhortations are addressed to those who have rejected "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Those vessels of wrath, who have fitted themselves for destruction, are actually admonished to prepare for Antichrist by *developing in themselves* "Christlike qualities." This exhortation embodies the essence of the original lie of the Serpent, namely that man possesses the inherent power to become "as God." Unregenerate men are addressed as having the power to "develop in themselves the Christlike qualities," "to unfold in ourselves the spiritual life," etc.

Mrs. Besant has even the hardihood to apply the very words in which the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of the Apostle Peter, speaks of Christ, to those corrupt sinners whom she styles "the Great Ones of the race." She says that an accused person would ordinarily "defend himself, or bring a suit for libel, or take some other means of that kind. Those are not the weapons of the Great Ones of the race. 'When He was reviled He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.'" Mrs. Besant does not fear to give utterance to this shocking blasphemy, but she prudently refrains from telling her readers the source from which she took those words.

#### BE ON GUARD.

6. We shall not dwell longer upon this new design of the resourceful enemy. Enough has been said to put upon their guard all readers who are likely to heed any warning as to the dangers of these "perilous times." But one further observation we would make, namely, we may be sure that the great Opposer of God's purposes had a special reason for launching the Order of the Star of the East *at this particular time*. That reason could be none other than the knowledge on his part that the time is a hand for the rising of "the BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR." Wherefore, they "who watch for the morning" should see in this organization a further reason for their confidence that "the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

7. *Never before in the history of the race of Adam has a society been formed to await and prepare for the coming of a great Leader.* The pamphlet truly says, in italic type, that "there would seem to be opening before this Order an opportunity to which, so far as we know, the history of the world presents no parallel." Such unique preparations must presage the happening of an event *without parallel* in the annals of mankind. Such indeed is the case.

And thus it has come to pass, under our very eyes, that an organization is in process of formation by those who reject and deny the Christ of God, with the object of *preparing a reception for Antichrist*. That organization will undoubtedly be more numerous, more coherent, and better disciplined, than the little company of those who wait for God's Son from heaven. Shall they also be more zealous, more fervent and more devoted? Shall it be said of any of us, "Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the King back?" Let the example of the enemies of the truth serve rather to quicken our zeal and devotion. in order that we may sincerely say from the heart:

"I wait FOR THE LORD, my soul doth wait, and in HIS WORD do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning" (Psa. 130:5, 6).

## THE LULL AFTER THE STORM.

C. K. MATHEWS.

Several years ago it was my lot, in God's providence, to pass through a cyclone. Like all twisters in this country it came from the southwest, sweeping everything before it. The noise was terrible—a rush and a roar, backed up by a heavy gale. It seemed as if the air was full of fire, a lightning flash every second. It struck the house, lifted it from its foundations, shook it as an angry father would his child, and hurried on. In an instant all was still, as quiet as a bed room; then the rain began to fall gently on the roof, reassuring me that all was well. Like Moses, I had been hidden in God's hand while He passed by; for unto this day Jehovah rides upon the storm.

As it is in nature, so will it be in the world. And the storm is raging now. Whatever else follows, we may look for one thing—a little breathing spell. After all God's judgments, there is a little rest, opportunity for repentance; then a heavier judgment. Much wrath has been executed in the past few months. Much more lingers. How differently things are going from the way men would have them! I remember Ingersoll's dream of the future: "A world at peace, adorned with every form of art." This was a dream. What do we see in reality? A world at war, harnessed with every engine of destruction. We see the nations of the world turning their wealth into powder and firearms. We see the strength and manhood of the world in the trenches, fight-

ing like beasts in the jungle. We see men, created in the image of God, born of the breath of his nostrils, falling like grain before the reapers, their blood is poured out like water. Peace by political methods can never come. Dr. Aked, the California preacher who sailed on the Ford peace expedition, came back and said with a heavy heart: "There is no short-cut to the Millennium." The storm is on; and the storm once started, at the proper temperature, and with the proper air currents, must spend its fury.

When the terrible cyclone struck New Albany a few weeks ago, the City Council met and in just twenty minutes they had formed plans for their work. It was not a time then to discuss lengthy ways and means. Men were dying under the wreckage—they must be saved. All night they toiled, and ceased not until their work was finished. Such is the task before us. Who knows whether we were all called into the kingdom for such a time as this. Now as never before let us bear testimony. The minds of many in the world are turned toward God. Many will listen now. Every great catastrophe has a sobering effect. Many are reflecting now as to what the end will be. A word might save them. It is at this hour and when the lull comes that we must do our work. When men's hearts are softened, some by sorrow and some by anxiety, let us reach out and call them home to Jesus. As yet the storm rages. The rulers are trembling on their thrones. The hearts of great men are sinking for fear and expectation of the things that are coming on the world. The earthly powers are being shaken from their foundations. The seas are troubled, the mountains are quaking. But above the noise and tumult can still be heard the voice of Jehovah as in the days of old: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

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## COUNTING GOD OUT.

SUMNER SPALDING.

The conflict in Europe combined with the food shortage, has brought a pitiable cry from the masses. It shows where their trust has been. The papers are full of urgent appeals to do everything possible to increase the food supply, but they are leaving God out of the question. How easily God could put a blanket on their plans. What are the efforts of men worth if God is not recognized and if His blessing is not in it? But God cares for His children. We have been called out of the world. We are no longer of the world. These facts bring such consolation to us. O, that men would serve Jehovah.

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If one-tenth the cost of the Villa expedition had been spent twenty years ago in disseminating the Gospel in Mexico, the Villa expedition would probably have been unnecessary, and we would have had better neighbors.

## THE WHOLE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE SCHOOL.

MARK A. MATTHEWS.

There are several fundamental facts which should be recognized and acted upon at once.

We are living in ominous times.

We are approaching the period before the second coming of Christ.

We are entering the period in which the falling away will be manifested.

There are more inducements being offered by the worldly powers to draw people away from the church than ever before. The golf links, the moving picture shows, and the automobiles are desecrating the Sabbath, demolishing the homes, depleting the church audiences, impeding spiritual progress, affecting sincerity, abolishing church loyalty, and establishing a condition of godlessness which is appalling.

This condition and these facts apply to all parts of the country, all cities, all communities, and all churches, great and small, prominent and obscure. What is the remedy, and can we apply it?

The remedy certainly has in it the following elements:

Bring the people back to the faith once delivered to the saints.

Put the church on its knees in incessant prayer.

Establish, and call the home around the family altar . . . .

Put every man, woman and child in the church and out of the church, whom you can secure, into a daily Bible class.

The conditions have been to a degree comprehended, and the remedies above suggested are being applied by the First Presbyterian Church of Seattle, Wash.

The church realizes that the people do not know the Bible, are not studying the Bible, and that the ignorance of the Bible is the cause of the falling away, the neglect of church duty, and the violation of all laws. Therefore, we conceived the idea of teaching the Bible every day in the week and every night in the week. We have consecrated elders, and consecrated women, as well as ministers, who are thoroughly trained, who know how to teach, and who are giving their time to the work. No doubt every church has at least one elder, and one good Bible woman who can teach the Bible.

The church is open every day in the week, and there are services conducted throughout the week. On Sunday morning at 8:45, Bible study begins. Throughout the day lessons are taught. The last service is about ten o'clock Sunday night. The smallest church could have a Bible class, and a Sunday school, a preaching service, and a Bible class following the preaching service.

Beginning Monday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock classes are

taught from 2:00 until 4:00, and from 8:00 to 10:00 p. m. This is the program every day except Saturday. In addition, from 3:30 to 4:30 p. m. every day classes are open for public school, high school and university pupils. The laymen and the good Bible women give their time at least one day in the week to the teaching of these classes. The smallest church, no doubt, has in it some good Bible woman who will be willing to give an hour a day to the teaching of public school pupils in her community. No doubt the smallest church has at least one elder who, with the pastor, could teach a Bible class every night in the week. Bible study is the church's greatest need.

In addition to the work inside of the church just mentioned, we go to different sections of the city and enter the home of some member of the church who is willing to throw it open for a Bible class, and we gather the members of the church and the neighbors, regardless of the church to which they belong or whether they belong to any church, into that neighborhood Bible class. That class is taught by some good woman, or layman, or minister. The smallest church, no doubt, has in it homes willing to throw open their doors to Bible classes. No doubt teachers can be secured, neighbors can be enlisted, and classes organized.

In addition, we have organized classes to be taught just before the prayer meeting. Prayer meeting is held on Thursday evening. At six o'clock we have a workers' dinner, where one hundred or more of the workers assemble. At 7:00 o'clock the Bible classes open. There are several taught in the church before the prayer meeting hour. At 8:00 o'clock all the people come into the prayer meeting service, which is devoted to an expository piece of work. Some book of the Bible is expounded in an expository way, chapter by chapter. The audience reads the book in concert. The pastor leads this class, quizzes the audience and teaches the lesson contained in the chapter, using the expository and quiz method. Every church ought to have a prayer meeting. It would aid the prayer meeting very much to have Bible classes taught before the prayer meeting hour begins.

We are thoroughly convinced that if we can put every member of the church into a Bible class we will develop the church spiritually, prevent the loss of members by the falling away process, and will increase the spiritual life of the members.

Preachers do not know their Bibles, elders do not know their Bibles, church members do not know their Bibles, men out in the world do not know the Bible. There is more ignorance of the Bible than anyone can possibly imagine.

Put the whole church into a Bible school. Study the Bible every day, teach it every day. The church was entrusted with the duty of searching the Scriptures, teaching the Bible and preaching the Gospel.

• We urge the churches of America to join us in this program.  
—*From Christian Workers' Magazine.*

# ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

## MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

Increased light means increased responsibility. We have thought that we are very well informed in matters relating to "the plan of salvation." Does our missionary work look like we understand the Scriptures on this part of the plan? \*\* When Brother and Sister Yoshie visited his home town in the north of Japan, he spoke in the school building and in a dwelling, and she gave a talk to women. One was baptized. \*\* Bro. Vincent tells of some sisters who decided to give the Sunday eggs to the cause of Christ, but when the hens got to laying twice as many eggs on Sunday as on any other day—the sisters quit giving the proceeds. Isn't that a poor commentary on those women? The Lord could spill His blood for them, but they couldn't give him the eggs they had decided to give.

"In response to Bro. S. O. Martin's distress in his prolonged sickness, the church has ordered \$200 sent to him," writes D. J. Poynter, of the Albion, Neb., church, and mentions that they had previously sent him \$50. There are some doings of the brethren of which we need not be ashamed. \*\* Miss Lillie Cy-pert, of Marshall, Ark., who has been in correspondence with Bro. McCaleb, is a volunteer for the work in Japan. Her physician's statement of her condition is very favorable, and those who wish her to go to the field at the earliest possible date may send their assistance to me (R. 10, Buechel, Ky.). I think it would be fine for her to be associated with Sister Andrews and the others in Tokyo. \*\* Miss Nellie Straiton, who is doing a good work in forwarding mission funds, reports a falling off in gifts; Bro. Vincent has the same report; and I have noticed it in some funds too. Shall we practice war-time economy by cutting off support for the Lord's work? Have you heard of the man who cut off the limb upon which he sat? Well, if you want to prosper, don't begin by slighting the One "from whom all blessings flow."

A good sister in Texas answers the call for \$3.00 a month to take the place of that amount from a church which has ceased to give (and to write also) in Ohio. \*\* Our teachers have it in their power to change the whole missionary situation among us in short order. In my opinion, one hundred preachers could stir up such an interest as we have never seen, and do it before the summer is over *if they would attempt it*. \*\* A society for the propagation of Hinduism or Hindu culture is proposed. Already they imitate Christian procedure in Sunday schools. Wouldn't it be a calamity if the heathen would "out-evangelize" the Christians?

For the months of March, April and May, I have received the following funds: McCaleb, \$109.72; Vincent, \$18.58; Jelley, and helpers, \$364.00; McHenry and helpers, \$225.80; Martin,

\$423.32; free literature, \$109.45; miscellaneous, \$24.40; total, \$1,809.60. \*\* When sending your missionary gifts, please do not use cashier's checks, personal checks and certain drafts, if you live outside of Kentucky. Money orders and drafts on New York, Chicago and St. Louis cost me nothing for cashing. \*\* "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might." \*\* Bro. Martin says (April 25) that he is able to do his own type-writing and that people over there have been very good to them.

We know so well the Unity teaching of the Seventeenth of John that we have failed to find there its Missionary teaching. But the chapter is in fact as strong on Missions as it is on Unity. It is the Redeemer's prayer before the Passion—sanctum sanctorum of the New Testament. First He prays for Himself; then for the immediate disciples; and then for all believers of all time.

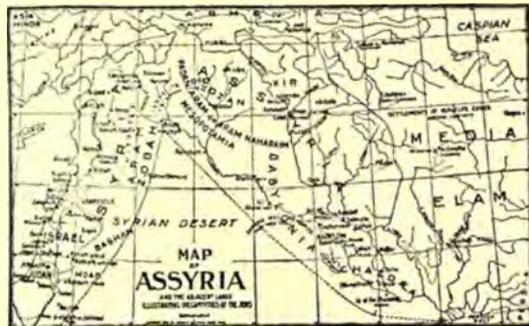
The great missionary verses are 6, 8, 11, 14, 18, 26. The Lord is reviewing in the ears of God how He had manifested the Father's name (which is His nature) to the disciples and made it known to them: 6, 26; how He had given them God's word, passing it on to them just as it had come to Him from above; 8, 14; how, while He was on the point of leaving the world, He was sending them out into the world and leaving them in it: 11, 18.

Let us ask an impressive question: The Lord Jesus made known God's name to those men: *What for?* He gave unto them God's word: *What for?* He left them in the world in His own absence: *What for?* He sent them out into the world: *What for?* This scripture section does not itself undertake to answer; but in the light of other scriptures, especially the Great Commission (Mt. 28; Mk. 16; Lk. 24; Jno. 20) the silence of the seventeenth chapter is eloquent. I shall not attempt to break in upon that silence here. But say: Are not *we* His disciples also? And has He not made known to *us*, also the Father's nature, left us God's Word, and sent us out into the world in His absence?

E. L. J.

MAP OF ASSYRIA.  
And the adjacent lands  
Illustrating the Captiv-  
ities of the Jews.

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## THE SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 2.

July 8, 1917.

## AHAZ THE FAITHLESS KING.

**Golden Text:** "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him." (Heb. 11:6).

**Lesson Text:** \* 2 Chron. 28:1-27. Memorize verses 1, 2.

1. Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and he did not that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, like David his father; 2 but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for the Baalim. 3 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel. 4 And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree. 5 Wherefore Jehovah his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away of his a great multitude of captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter

20. And Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him and distressed him, but strengthened him not. 21 For Ahaz took away a portion out of the house of Jehovah, and out of the house of the kind and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria: but it helped him not. 22 And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against Jehovah, this same king Ahaz. 23 For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him; and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria helped them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel. 24 And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of Jehovah; and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. 25 And in every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger Jehovah, the God of his father. 26 Now the rest of his acts, and all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem; for they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

Verse 1. What was the verdict upon Ahaz? In whose eyes had he failed?

Verse 3. What suggestion lies in the reference to the fact that Jehovah cast out those nations who practiced those things? Read Lev. 18:21, 24-30.

Verse 5. What was the outcome of Ahaz' course? Would men, in judging from the outward situation, have guessed that this was the cause of Ahaz's defeat?

Verses 20-21. To whom did Ahaz now look for help? With that and other preparation, to whom did they fail to look? Isa. 22:9-11. What was the result of Ahaz reliance on the king of Assyria? What is the end of all such reliance? Jer. 17:5-8. When Israel repents, what will they say to the Lord? Hos. 14:3.

Verse 22. What is God's object in chastening His people? Heb. 12:10, 11. Does it always have that effect? Read Amos 4:6-12. What should distress and sorrow lead a man to do?

Verse 23. Why did Ahaz sacrifice to the gods of Damascus? Was his reasoning correct? Why had the kings of Syria been victorious over him? What was the outcome of this insane step? Verses 24, 25. Note the Golden Text. Did not all of Ahaz' actions show that he had no faith in God? What had Isaiah told him? (Isa. 7:9, last sentence). Can any man serve two masters? What will he invariably do? Matt. 6:24. How did Ahaz show his contempt for the true Master? When Christians go to following after false gods (Phil. 3:19; Col. 3:15) how do they usually show their disregard of the true God?

Verse 27. What honor was denied Ahaz in his death? Why that? 1 Sam. 2:30. John 12:26 with Mark 8:38.

## THE THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 3.

July 15, 1917.

## HEZEKIAH, THE FAITHFUL KING.

**Golden Text:** "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him."

**Lesson Text:** 2 Chron. 30:1-27. Memorize verses 11, 12.

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 escaped 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 stiff-necked, 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. 10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. 11 Nevertheless certain men of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. 12 Also upon Judah came the hand of God to give them one heart, to do the commandment of the king, and of the princes by the word of Jehovah. 13 And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great assembly.

Verse 1. Was Hezekiah king of Judah or of Israel? Why then did he call on those outside of his kingdom?

Verses 2, 3. Was the second month the proper time to keep the Passover? What did God allow in emergency? See Num. 9:1-14. Was there such an emergency this time? (Vs. 17-20.)

Verse 5. Find Dan and Beersheba on the map. Was Hezekiah very thorough-going? Read 2 Chron. 31:21. That is what we need. Why was it necessary to make such a proclamation? Is the fact that the people have long neglected and disobeyed some requirement of God a good reason that the matter should be left alone and not agitated?

Verses 6-8. On what was Hezekiah's appeal based? Had they already suffered punishment? (2 Kings 17:3).

Verse 9. What great truth concerning God is here set forth? Jer. 3:12, 13).

Verse 10. What reception did these messengers get? Is that often the case? (Prov. 1:24-31).

Verse 11. Was it, after all, worth the while? Ought we be discouraged if we meet with rebuff and ridicule? Are the few that will hear very precious in the eyes of God? (John 1:10-13); Rev. 18:4).

Verse 12. Did God back up the good work in Judah also? What was the result? Could such a unity be got today?

Verse 13. What was the outward effect of Hezekiah's work? Read the rest of 2 Chron. 30, and all of 31.

## THE FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 4.

July 22, 1917.

## SENNACHERIB'S INVASION OF JUDAH.

**Golden Text:** "God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble." Ps. 46:1.

**Lesson Text:**\* 2 Kings 19:20-37. (Read 2 Kings 18:13-37). Memorize verses 32, 33.

20. Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard thee. 21 This is the word that Jehovah hath spoken concerning him: The virgin daughter of Zion hath espoused thee and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. 22 Whom hast thou defied and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. 28 Because of thy raging against me, and because thine arrogance is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. 29 And this shall be the sign unto thee: ye shall eat this year that which groweth of itself, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. 30 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. 31 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall escape: the zeal of Jehovah shall perform this. 32 Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast up a mound against it. 33 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith Jehovah. 34 For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. 35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four-

(First of all read the Notes Preliminary to this lesson).

## I. Jehovah's Answer to Hezekiah.

Verse 20. Did Hezekiah's prayer make any difference? Why did God hear? (Ps. 34:15, 16; 66:18). If God hears what does it mean? 1 John 5:15.

Verse 21. Who is "the virgin daughter of Zion," and "of Jerusalem?" Lam. 2:15.

Verse 22. Was the Assyrian in his ignorance and unbelief conscious whom he had defied and blasphemed? Against whom had he dared to raise himself up? Isa. 10:15. Read 2 Kings 1:23-27.

Verse 28. How would God recompense him his boasting and arrogance?

Verse 29. What "sign" that Jehovah's hand was in it did He give Hezekiah and the people? How would that be a sign? What time-limit had God set to the Assyrian's oppression?

Verses 30, 31. Would he be able to destroy the whole nation? Is there not always a remnant of Israel that escapes? (Isa. 6:13; Rom. 11:5). What was the guarantee that this should be so? Comp. Isa. 9:7.

Verses 32, 33. Was this merely prediction, or would God see to it that he should not and could not do so? Isa. 46:11.

Verse 34. On what fact would the safety of the city rest? On what two accounts would God defend her? Why for His own sake? Ezek. 36:22, 32. Why for David's sake? Comp. Gen. 19:29; Rom. 11:28.

## II. How God Delivered the City.

Verse 35. By what instrumentality was this judgment executed upon the Assyrian army? What are we told about the power of God's angels? Ps. 103:20; 2 Pet. 2:11. What about the angel of Jehovah? Ps. 34:7. If the Lord Jesus had wanted outside protection, what could he have asked and received of the Father? Matt. 26:53. Would that many angels have been needed? What is the office of angels toward us? Heb. 1:14.

score and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. 37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarphaddon his son reigned in his stead.

Verse 36. Did God's prediction (v. 28, 32, 33) come to pass? Was it fulfilled exactly and literally? Read the account in 2 Chron. 32:20-23.

Verse 37. To what miserable end did the proud Assyrian King come? What is God's lesson in this? Ps. 146:3-5. Who had put his trust in the king of Assyria? (Ahaz).

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"The angel of death spread his wings on the blast,  
And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed;  
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,  
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever were still.  
"And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,  
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;  
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beaten surf,  
And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;  
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
The lances uplifted the trumpet unblown."

#### NOTES ON LESSON 4.

##### I. PRELIMINARY.

In the sixth year of Hezekiah, the good king of Judah, Israel was carried into captivity by the King of Assyria. A full account, with reasons given, is found in 2 Kings 17. Consider what an impression this must have made on Hezekiah. We cannot judge him for the action recorded in 2 Kings 18: 13-16. But this did not satisfy the rapacity of the Assyrian king. In an arrogant message delivered by "Rabshakeh" he offered to lead them away captive to a good country elsewhere, if they would come out and surrender to him. In his pride and boasting he also discredited Hezekiah's God, and classed the true God with the gods of other nations who had proved unable to deliver their people out of the Assyrian's mighty hand. Throughout the timidity and disheartedness of Hezekiah's men is seen. (2 Kings 18). But through Isaiah the prophet, God comforted and encouraged him. (2 Kings 19:1-7). There was a temporary relief; but Rabshakeh sent another impudent message to Hezekiah; and Hezekiah spread the letter before the Lord, and poured out in beautiful and fitting words the burden of his heart. (2 Kings 19:8-19). At this point our lesson begins. The student, and especially the teacher, should by all means read carefully 2 Kings 18 and 19 and get the situation clearly in mind. Another beautiful and weighty message from God in regard to this boastful Assyrian is found in Isa. 10:5-19.

##### II. SEQUEL.

It must have been about the time of Sennacherib's invasion that Hezekiah's Sickness occurred. Read the account as found in Isa. 38, with Hezekiah's psalm of thanksgiving. See the significant note given in 2 Chron. 32: 24-28, "Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem." This has reference doubtless to the business of the ambassadors from Babylon. (2 Chron. 32:31; 2 Kings 20:12-18. Hezekiah, however, humbled himself after this. He was one of the greatest and best of the kings of Judah.

## THE FIFTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 5.

July 29, 1917.

## GOD'S GRACIOUS INVITATION.

**Golden Text:** "Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near." Isa. 55:6.

**Lesson Text:**\* Isa. 55:1-13. Memorize verses 1, 2.

1. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. 3 Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. 4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples. 5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not; and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee. 6 Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near; 7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 11 so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Verse 1. To whom is the invitation? What qualification must one have to be a candidate for God's free blessings? Matt. 5:3, 6; and 11:28. Those who are conscious of their need, and sincerely hunger and thirst and they alone, are invited to come. John 6:35; 7:37; Rev. 22:17.

Verse 2. Do not people everywhere work and toil and strive for things that cannot bring satisfaction? Hab. 2:13; Eccl. 1:2, 3; 2:11. What better thing does God offer? John 6:27. How is that better bread obtained? (By hearkening diligently unto God.) Isa. 84:17, 18. Does it feed the inner man or the outer?

Verse 3. What three steps does he mark out? How does this agree with John 6:44, 45. What promise is made concerning the soul? What sort of covenant does God make with these newly quickened souls? What are the sure mercies of David? Acts 13:24 with Heb. 7:25.

Verse 4. Is he speaking here of David himself, personally, or of "great David's greater Son?" Note: he calls Christ, the son and successor of David, by the name of "David," just like Jacob's descendants are all along called "Jacob;" just like the successors to Julius Caesar's throne were called "Caesar." Comp. Hos. 3:5; Ezek. 37:24; Rev. 1:5.

Verse 5. Did God promise to glorify his people Israel? What would strange peoples and foreign nations do in that day? Isa. 60:1-10. What would be the attraction? Cp. Isa. 2:2, 3; Zech. 8:20-23. Consider whether this has ever been fulfilled.

Verses 6, 7. What does he urge men to do? Within what time-limit? When may God be found? Heb. 3:15; 2 Cor. 6:2. When should they call upon Him? When is it too late? Luke 13:25. How shall men seek after God? Can the wicked man pursue his own way and follow his own thought and yet come to God? Why not? 1 John 1:5. Is it sufficient for the wicked to

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quit his wickedness? Against whom has he sinned? Ps. 51:4. To whom must he return? What will God do for every man that so returns to Him? Will He pardon reluctantly and barely, or how? Comp. Jer. 3:12; Luke 15:20-24.

Verses 8, 9. Why is it necessary for men to abandon their ways and thoughts in order to come into harmony with God? How much higher are His ways and thoughts than ours? Where do we learn of God's ways and thoughts? (Heb. 1:1, 2.

Verses 10, 11. Does the rain and snow descend from heaven in vain? What does it accomplish? In what respect is the word of God like that? What is the purpose and object for which God's word is sent? Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 2:15, 16. Matt. 3:12. What ultimate glory has God purposed to accomplish? See last two verses of this chapter: Isa. 55:12, 13.

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#### NOTES ON LESSON 5.

The ground of this Gracious Invitation is seen in Isa. 53. Whether before the time of Christ or since, all God's free offers of mercy depend upon the Cross of Jesus. If He had not come and suffered and died as a Sacrifice for our sins, there could have been no offer of repentance, no forgiveness of sin, no redemption of the lost, or salvation of sinners. "Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. 53:16). He Himself "bore our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Pet. 2:24. "Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Luke 24:46, 47. It is upon the basis of Christ's death for all, that mercy and pardon is offered to all, free for the accepting.

#### A PROPHECY CONCERNING ISRAEL.

The 55th chapter of Isaiah is spoken directly to and about Israel, the nation, and has specific application to the time of their national conversion. But, like other prophetic scriptures, it finds application wherever it can be applied; and today it applies to the free, world-wide gospel-proclamation. The greater part of the chapter is as truly fulfilled and being fulfilled, in a general way, as it ever could be. But so far as the specific application to Israel is concerned, it awaits fulfillment. Israel is nationally under rejection today. But her hardening is not total, nor unlimited in duration: they are hardened in part, until the fullness of the Gentiles (to whom now the gospel-offer is chiefly being made) shall have come in. Then God will turn His hand upon Israel. Even now, although they are enemies so far as the gospel is concerned, they are beloved for their forefathers' sake. For God does not go back on His purposes and covenants, His gifts and calling. When the nation of Israel is saved it will be by this same gospel. It will be because they abide no longer in unbelief; and ungodliness is turned away from them, and their sins will be forgiven under the terms of the new covenant. God will circumcise their hearts, that so they may love Him with all their heart; and He will put His Spirit within them and cause them to walk in His statutes. That will be a time of unprecedented world-wide blessing. (Check all these statements up by Rom. 11:11-16, 23-29; Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:26, 27).

#### THE INVITATION FOR MEN TODAY.

But today and to us comes, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the call and offer of vs. 1, 2. We are invited to hear; and by the word of God's grace we are begotten again (1 Pet. 1:23) and our souls made alive (Eph. 2:1). We may so enter into the everlasting covenant and share in "the sure mercies of David." The warning and summons of verses 6 and 7 must today be rung in the ears of sinners, and the promise applies to the believing penitents that obey the gospel.

## THE FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF AUGUST.

Lesson 6.

August 5, 1917.

## MANASSEH'S SIN AND REPENTANCE.

Golden Text: "Let the wicked forsake his way and unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55:7.

Lesson Text:\* 2 Chron. 33:1-20. Memorize verses 12, 13.

9 And Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did evil more than did the nations whom Jehovah destroyed before the children of Israel. 10 And Jehovah spake to Manasseh, and to his people; but they gave no heed. 11 Wherefore Jehovah brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh in chains, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. 12 And when he was in distress, he besought Jehovah his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. 13 And he prayed unto him; and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that Jehovah he was God. 14 Now after this he built an outer wall to the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entrance at the fish gate; and he compassed Ophel about with it, and raised it up to a very great height; and he put valiant captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. 15 And he took away the foreign gods, and the idol out of the house of Jehovah, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of Jehovah, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. 16 And he built up the altar of Jehovah, and offered thereon sacrifices of peace-offerings and of thanksgiving, and commanded Judah to serve Jehovah, the God of Israel.

(Read the first paragraph of the Notes first).

Verse 9. Did Manasseh's sin stop with himself, or did he draw others into it? Does it often turn out that way? Did he stop at becoming as evil as the abandoned heathen nations? When one of God's people turns away from God, does he not often sink lower than most people of the world?

Verse 10. Did Manasseh and his people sin ignorantly and without warning? Did that make his guilt heavier?

Verse 11. What must inevitably follow such a course as Manasseh's? In what shape did the judgment fall? Who brought it about?

Verse 12. What did Manasseh do in his distress? What did God say He would not despise? (Ps. 51:17) Was it too late then to repent? Note the words, "yet even now" in Joel 2:12, 13. Comp. Judg. 10:10-16.

Verse 13. How did God respond to Manasseh's plea? Did Manasseh perceive and acknowledge the hand of God in this? Comp. Dan. 4:28-37.

Verse 14. What help and strength came to Jerusalem through the penitent and restored king?

Verses 15, 16. How is the reality and genuineness of repentance proved? How did Manasseh demonstrate the sincerity of his repentance? What wrongs did he correct and undo? What positive steps did he take to reinstate Jehovah and His worship in Jerusalem and throughout Judah?

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## NOTES ON LESSON 6.

## Manasseh's Sin.

It pleased God to put one of the worst cases of evil on record, so that, by the mercy shown to the chief sinners, other lost souls may take courage to turn to God in their distress. Manasseh had had a good father. (Heze-

kiah). He had his father's life and example and teaching to go by. But Manasseh sinned against his light. Moreover, not satisfied to drift along in the current of evil, he went out of his way to do wrong with a purpose. It is had enough to acquiesce in, and fall in with, evils that are already established; but to bring re-established evil where it had been removed shows a set determination to sin. This Manasseh did. He drew sin with a cart-ropes, and wearied himself to commit iniquity. "And Jehovah spake unto Manasseh"—that was an extension of mercy and grace. But he spurned that also. Then judgment began to fall; and, like the Prodigal Son, in the bitterness of it, he came to his senses and sincerely turned unto God.

#### Why This Was Written.

If any man should think to find comfort and encouragement in his way of sin by this story of God's mercy, and should console himself with the delusive hope that "some day" he too, will make it all right,—he has badly missed the point of this scripture, and is "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." The man who sets out in the course of sin with such a deceitful hope, will find that God cannot be mocked. Even of honest Prodigals—it is not every Prodigal who starts away from home who returns; and many a man who has sinned only moderately, has perished without remedy. What then is the lesson of this story? Just this, that if now, "even now," any man, though his sins be a scarlet, will truly turn to God, God will have mercy upon him and will abundantly pardon. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "A broken and a contrite heart the Lord will not despise."

#### What is Repentance?

Repentance, whether in the Old Testament, or in the New, is always the same, and always an indispensable thing in the case of any sinner, then or now. Manasseh repented in the prison in Babylon. We are told that he (1) besought Jehovah his God; (2) that he humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers; (3) that he prayed unto Him. A man could possibly do all three of these things without truly repenting. People can easily deceive themselves and one another into thinking that they have repented, when they have failed to do the one essential thing: to turn from their evil way, and unto God. (Isa. 55:6, 7). Without this every other sign is misleading and worthless. "Rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God." Joel 2:12, 13. That Manasseh did so turn, God who knoweth the hearts saw, and the sequel proved it. For Manasseh after his deliverance set himself resolutely to do right and to undo what he could of his former evil.

God does not always rescind His judgment as promptly as in Manasseh's case. Sometimes He does. In every case He begins to heal and to bless from the moment of true repentance and to make even the bitter consequences of our past sin a blessing to us. The sinner was forgiven and saved; but his sin was a blow to the people of Judah from which they never recovered. 2 Kings 23:26, 27; 24:3, 4.

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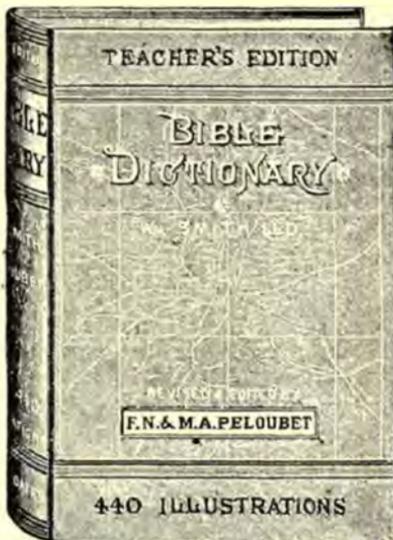
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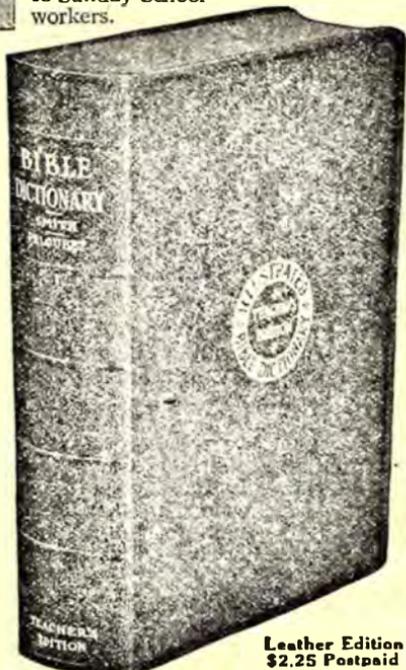
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and fought against the Philistines. And David waxed faint; 16 and Ishbi-benob, who was <sup>o</sup> of the sons of the <sup>o</sup> giant, the weight of whose spear was three hundred *shekels* of brass in weight, he being girded with <sup>a</sup> new sword, thought to have slain David. 17 But <sup>a</sup> Abishai the son of Zeruiah succored him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, 'Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not <sup>a</sup> the lamp of Israel.

18 <sup>a</sup> And it came to pass after

Is. 31. 30  
 Jer. 32. 47;  
 Dt. 32. 4  
 57: 18. 2  
 2: Ps. 31.  
 3: 71. 3  
 1 Pa. 91. 2;  
 141. 2  
 Gen. 15. 1;  
 Dt. 33. 29  
 Dt. 33. 17;  
 Lk. 1. 60  
 Ps. 9. 9; 14.  
 6: 40. 7, 11;  
 71. 7; Jer.  
 18. 19  
 Pa. 48. 1;  
 60. 4  
 Ps. 93. 4;  
 Jon. 2. 3  
 Ps. 69. 14,  
 15  
 Ps. 119. 3  
 Ps. 116. 4;



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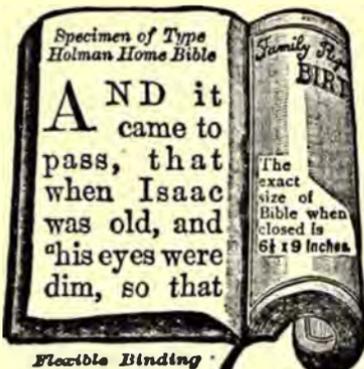
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22 And the prophet Isaiah said unto himself, and mark, and for at the return of t

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