

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND REMARKS

FOR BIBLE READERS

CONCERNING THE TEXT AND TEACHING OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT

DEDICATED TO ALL THAT ARE DISPOSED TO STUDY
THE ENTIRE BIBLE WITH CARE IN ORDER
TO UNDERSTAND IT

BY

A BIBLE STUDENT

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"

— *Jesus Christ*

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By Wm. E. Wallace

DEDICATION

Allen R. Sommer was the last surviving son of Daniel Sommer.

Allen died in January of 1977.

Frances, Allen's widow, has made possible this reprint.

To Allen and Frances Sommer this reprint is dedicated.

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INDEX

| | Pages |
|----------------------|---------|
| MATTHEW | 1- 96 |
| MARK | 97-138 |
| LUKE | 139-197 |
| JOHN | 198-256 |
| ACTS OF THE APOSTLES | 257-344 |
| ROMANS | 345-413 |
| I. CORINTHIANS | 414-469 |
| II. CORINTHIANS | 470-506 |
| GALATIANS | 507-535 |
| EPHESIANS | 536-557 |
| PHILIPPIANS | 558-567 |
| COLOSSIANS | 568-579 |
| I. THESSALONIANS | 580-590 |
| II. THESSALONIANS | 591-599 |
| I. TIMOTHY | 600-621 |
| II. TIMOTHY | 622-631 |
| TITUS | 632-638 |
| PHILEMON | 639-640 |
| HEBREWS | 641-673 |
| JAMES | 674-688 |
| I. PETER | 689-706 |
| II. PETER | 707-716 |
| I. JOHN | 717-734 |
| II. JOHN | 735-737 |
| III. JOHN | 738-740 |
| JUDE | 741-745 |
| REVELATION | 746-831 |



PREFATORY NOTES

“Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.”

Psalm 119:89

IN the volume to which the reader's attention is hereby invited its author has tried to avoid the damaging effects of humanly arranged commentaries on the Bible in several particulars.

1. By absence of the word "commentary" front its name. This volume is not classed with "commentaries" by its author.

2. By absence of the Sacred Text from its pages, except as has been necessary in what is offered in its pages concerning that Text. Its readers therefore are required to use in a separate volume the text of the Bible freely and carefully as found recorded in any copy of that text which they may use in studying the Bible with this volume.

3. By absence of extracts front humanly arranged commentaries, nearly all of which were written in a darker religious age than the present, also extracts from those that seemed to be under the influence of such commentaries.

4. By offering most instruction on those parts of the Sacred Text that are supposed to be most difficult, and by avoiding all fanciful or speculative conclusions.

The author of this volume has thus endeavored in name, matter and method, to avoid even the appearance of offering a humanly arranged commentary, and thus avoid the evil effects of such commentaries generally. As a further endeavor in this direction the author of this volume will send it forth without his own name, connected with it, in order that, with the exception of those that know him personally, it may be studied for what it is worth without regard to its authorship. Professed believers in Christ have, in many instances, been much damaged by the supposed authority of certain uninspired men. The names of God and of Christ and the Holy Spirit are the only names even in the Bible that should be revered. Besides these the names of angels and inspired men should be regarded with respect when their words are copied or quoted. But the names of all uninspired men, supposed to be great in the religious world, should not be regarded as worthy of notice when authority in religion is considered. Therefore the author of this volume after devoting more than forty years to the study of the Bible wishes to be known to its readers only as a BIBLE STUDENT.

FOR BIBLE READERS

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND REMARKS

MATTHEW — CHAPTER I

OF WHOM, and of what, are Bible readers informed in the first chapter of the record which we now begin to study? We are informed of an extraordinary person, named Jesus Christ, and of his earthly ancestry, or forefathers, from a man named Abraham to his foster-father, whose name was Joseph. We are likewise informed, in this chapter, of that person's mother, of his birth, and of the reason for his name, "Jesus." What is indicated by the record here given of the ancestry, birth, and name, of the mentioned person? It is indicated, by the record given of his ancestry, that he descended through a lineage of princes and kings whose most important words and deeds are found recorded in the volume commonly called, "Old Testament Scriptures." By the record here given of the birth of the mentioned person, his divine origin, as well as his human ancestry, is set forth. Then by his name, "Jesus," the fact is indicated that he was intended to be the Savior of his people, and by his name, "Christ," is indicated the fact that he was intended to be anointed, so as to become the anointed Savior of his people. What effect on the minds of mankind should be made by the extraordinary introduction given in this chapter of that extraordinary person, named Jesus Christ? It should challenge their best attention, and cause them to investigate his pretensions with their best diligence and devotion. For a writer to declare that he introduces to our attention the history of one who deserves to be designated Savior Anointed, or Anointed Savior, should cause us to determine to learn everything possible concerning him. If we do not thus determine we deny, by implication, that we are numbered with rational beings. The most ordinary exercise of reason will impel us to investigate most carefully the record of Him who is declared to be the highest, and most important, one, who was ever manifest among mankind, in human form. Indifference, in regard to the record of such a person, indicates that we are irreligious and irrational, brutish, and abominable.

Do we find in this chapter all the names of all the kings who belonged to the earthly ancestry of Jesus Christ? No. Between Joram and Ozias (Jehoram and Uzziah) the names of three kings are omitted, namely, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. (See 2 Chronicles 22nd, 23rd, 24th, and 25th chapters.) Then between Josias and Jeconias (Jehoiachin), the names of two kings are omitted, namely, Jehoahaz and Eliakim (Jehoiachim). (See 2 Chronicles 36th chapter.)

Why did Matthew omit the names of so many kings in his record of the ancestry of Jesus Christ? The 17th verse of this chapter implies that he omitted to record such names as were not necessary to be mentioned in order to indicate a generation. For instance, Jehoahaz reigned only "three months," Ahaziah reigned only "one year" and his brother, Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim, reigned only "eleven years." Such short reigns could be passed over without affecting the period designated by the word "generation." The two other kings, Joash and Amaziah, reigned longer, but for some reason their names are omitted from Matthew's record.

What may we say of the 8th verse of this chapter, which declares that "Joram begat Ozias," though Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, came between them? We may say that such a declaration is justified on the principle that a man is the father of all his bodily descendants. To this we may add that this declaration—"Joram begat Ozias"—should cause those to hesitate who, on the basis of Numbers 26:58, 59, deny the existence of more than one generation between Levi and Moses, and on that account deny that the Israelites were in Egypt more than a little over two hundred years. God's ways are not man's ways, neither are his thoughts man's thoughts, in regard to saving mankind, nor in regard to making a book for them to read. But his book needs to be studied, in the light of all that it declares, in order to be understood and appreciated.

What is taught by the expression "public example," as found in the 19th verse of this chapter? Deuteronomy 24:1 indicates that the Jewish law authorized a public divorcement of a woman who was in the condition of the mother of our Savior when Joseph was about to take her to be his wife.

Should we spend any time speculating in regard to the conception of our Savior in the womb of his mother? No. With reference to that subject, and all others which pertain to religion, we should obey the command, "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God." (I Peter 4:11.) This

means that we may say as much, on any subject, as the Sacred Text declares, and then we should be silent. What the Holy Spirit has declared in the Bible is the declaration of infinite wisdom and goodness, mercy and love. The silence of the Holy Spirit is the silence of infinite wisdom and goodness, mercy and love.

What may we learn by considering the 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter? By considering Isaiah 7:13-17, also Isaiah 8:1-4, we may learn that the prophecy referred to, in the 22nd and 23rd verses of the chapter before us, was a prophecy of double reference. It first referred to a child that should be born in the days of king Ahaz, as a sign in regard to his chief earthly enemies, and in the chapter now before us it refers to Jesus ' who came to save the obedient from their chief spiritual enemies. The prophet Isaiah promised a child who should be named "Immanuel," and who should be a sign of the temporal salvation of fleshly Israel, and the promise of that child was written in such form. that it could be justly applied to the spiritual salvation of spiritual Israel.

What is taught by the last verse of this chapter? We are taught that, until after the birth of Jesus, Joseph treated Mary just as he would have treated his own sister. He regarded her as sacred to Jehovah who had chosen her to be the mother of the Savior of the Lord's people. Is it right to worship Mary, because she was the mother of our Savior, or for any other reason? No. We should speak of her as "blessed," and thereby fulfil the prophecy which she uttered. (See Luke 1:48.) But every phase, or semblance, of worship offered to her, is without divine authority. All efforts to approach the Father in her name, and to place her in the position of a mediator, are unscriptural and anti-scriptural. (See John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5.)

Are we informed in the New Testament concerning any one who prayed to a dead saint? Yes. In Luke 16:24-31 we learn that the rich man in Hades prayed to Abraham. Was his prayer answered in any particular? It was not. What, then, may we safely say concerning the offering of prayers to dead saints? It is a doctrine which originated with a bad man, in a bad place, and in its origin was rejected. What should we, then, say of such a doctrine, if now advocated and practiced? We should say that its origin and results prove it to be contrary to the divine will, as that will is revealed in the New Testament, and therefore that all prayers offered to dead saints are sinful and useless.

CHAPTER II

What is set forth for Bible readers in this chapter? A statement is here given of certain facts connected with the birth, and infancy, of the Savior of mankind.

Who were those "wise men" that came "from the east to Jerusalem"? The Sacred Text does not inform us, and we should not speculate on the subject. Divine silence should be revered in regard to those "wise men," and with reference to every "untaught" question which may arise in regard to any part of the Sacred Text, except to expose the folly of such questions.

What is taught by the words "when they saw the star," as found in the 10th verse? The last of the preceding verse intimates that those words refer to the fact that the "wise men" "saw the star" stop "over where the young child was." But this is only an intimation, and should not be declared as a fact.

What may we say of the prophecy, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," as found in the last of the 15th verse of this chapter? As recorded in Hosea 11:1, it first referred to Israel, as a people, but it was so written that it could apply to Jesus when he was brought out of Egypt. It was, therefore, a prophecy of double reference. The same is true of the prophecy quoted in the 18th verse. Its first reference was to the Jews when they should be overthrown by the Babylonians. See Jeremiah 31:15, and the connection in which that verse is found.

And what may we say of the last verse of this chapter? It refers to a prophecy concerning Christ which is not recorded among the predictions of any Old Testament writer in that many words. But, as the word, "Nazarene," means "one who is separated," it is evident that all the prophets who wrote concerning Christ declared, by implication, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Take the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, for instance, and its bearing is that the one to whom it referred should be a separated character, not like any other. The same is true of all other prophecies concerning Christ. They all imply that he should be a separated character, and all that they implied, or otherwise taught, concerning him was actually fulfilled, in course of his personal ministry, or is now in course of fulfillment. The Apostle Paul wrote of him thus: "For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (See Hebrews 7:26.)

CHAPTER III

Of whom, and of what, do we learn in this chapter? We here learn of a preacher named "John the Baptist," of the doctrine that he preached, and of its effect on many who heard it, also of its effect on many who only heard concerning it. The chapter ends with an account of the baptism of Jesus, and of the public endorsement, which the Father gave him, after his baptism, declaring him to be his "beloved Son."

What does the word "Baptist" mean? It means "baptizer, as found in the Greek text of the New Testament. Was it ever applied, in the New Testament, to any one except John, who baptized Jesus? No. Is it right to apply the name "Baptist" to a church? It is not.

What may we learn by considering the doctrine which John the Baptist preached? It indicates that a new order of religious government called "the kingdom of heaven" was about to be introduced, and, on that account, the Jews were commanded to repent.

What is the meaning of the word "meet," as found in the 8th verse? It means "suitable" or "becoming." What is the meaning of the word "stones" in the 9th verse? It means "stones" in the ordinary sense of that word. John the Baptist endeavored to convince the Jews that they should not depend on the fact that they were descendants of Abraham because God could raise up children unto Abraham even from lifeless objects.

What is set forth by the 10th verse? It declares, in an illustration, that the time had come for every character to be separately tested, and those characters that could not stand the test should be condemned.

What may we learn by considering the 11th verse of this chapter? We may learn of three baptisms, one of "water," one of the "Holy Ghost," or Holy Spirit, and one of "fire." What is taught by the baptism of "fire," as found mentioned in the last of this verse? The word "fire," as found in the preceding verse, also as found in the succeeding verse, has reference to "fire" as an element of destruction. This implies that the word "fire" in the 11th verse has reference to "fire," as an element of destruction, and this being true we may learn what the baptism of fire means by reading Revelation 20:15. What should we say to those who declare that the baptism of fire here recorded refers to "fiery tongues" mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter and 3rd verse? We should say to them that Acts 2:3 does not mention "fiery tongues,"

but "tongues like as of fire." And what should we say to those who affirm that the baptism of "fire" here mentioned refers to the "fiery trial" of which the apostle Peter wrote in his first letter 4th chapter and 12th verse? We should inform them that the connection in which the word "fire" is found, in the 11th verse of this chapter, clearly shows that it refers to "fire" as an element of destruction. Moreover, in the 10th and 12th verses of this chapter John the Baptist referred to two classes of persons—the good and the bad, This implies that in the 11th verse both the good and the bad are referred to, though they are not separately mentioned. Both of those classes were among those whom John baptized. Some of the persons that John baptized were indeed baptized with the Holy Spirit, but a majority of them did not follow the Savior, and, as far as the divine record informs us, they never became Christians. Finally, the references to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as set forth in Acts 1:5; 2:4; 11:16, are made without mention of "fire." This implies that the baptism of "fire" was not intended for the obedient. Therefore it must have been intended for the disobedient, and will be inflicted when Matthew 25:41 will be fulfilled.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to be baptized? The 15th verse of the chapter before us declares that he was baptized because it became him to "fulfil all righteousness." What may we learn by considering the baptism of Jesus? We may learn that water baptism was necessary, as an act of "righteousness," even for the One who was without sin. We may also learn that the Father publicly acknowledged Jesus, after his baptism, to be his "only begotten Son," and in whom he was "well pleased." What does that fact imply in regard to the time when the Father will publicly acknowledge his adopted children? It implies, or indicates, that he acknowledges them as his children, after their baptism, and not before. Is this indication in harmony with all else that is set forth in the New Testament on this subject? It is. For instance, consider Mark 16:16. There we find that the promise—"shall be saved"—is mentioned after baptism, and is based on belief and baptism as conditions. Then in Acts 2:38, "remission of sins" and "the gift of the Holy Spirit," are promises which are mentioned as due after baptism. The case of Cornelius in Acts 10:44, 48 may appear to be an exception to the rule, but it will be found in harmony with the rule when the fact is considered that the bestowment of the Spirit, in his case, was miraculous, as indicated by the gift of tongues, and that the gift of tongues was for a sign to unbelievers. (See 1 Corinthians 14:22.) What effect should all this have on all re-

ligious teachers who deny that water baptism is necessary to the forgiveness of sins which is offered in the Gospel to alien sinners? It should cause them all to tremble with fear at the thought of their error.

CHAPTER IV

In regard to what events, in the life of Jesus, are we informed in this chapter? We find information here concerning the fasting which Jesus did in the wilderness, and of the temptations which he endured, also of his departure into a district called "Galilee," and of the fact that he went, and lived, in a city named "Capernaum," in order to fulfil a certain prophecy. Then we are informed of the fact that Jesus began to preach, and that he proclaimed the same doctrine which had been preached by John the Baptist. Information is next found in regard to Jesus calling Peter, and Andrew, also James, and John, to follow him. The chapter ends with mention of the preaching of Jesus, also of the fact that he wrought miracles, that his fame was great, and that he was followed by multitudes.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to fast to the utmost of physical endurance, and then to be tempted by the devil? Hebrews 2:10, 17 inform us that it was necessary, for him to have an experience in suffering, in order to perfect him for the position of high priest for his brethren. What may we learn by considering the threefold temptation which Jesus suffered when Satan approached him? We may learn that he was first tempted to gratify the desire of the flesh, or appetite, then he was tempted to gratify a common desire of human nature called "pride of life," and, finally, he was tempted to gratify what is designated, "the lust of the eyes." (See 1 John 2:16.) What should we learn by considering the means which Jesus used to defeat the devil? We should learn that we ought to use the same means in all our conflicts with the devil, as he approaches us through his agents. This implies that we should all become familiar with that which is recorded in the Bible, and should know how to apply it, at all times, in our defense.

What should we say to those who teach that the devil told a lie when he said to Jesus that he would give him "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them"? We should say that Jesus did not intimate that he told a lie when he spoke as if he had possession of the "kingdoms of this world," and their "glory." On the contrary, Jesus afterwards spoke of the devil as "the prince of this world." (See

John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.) All this implies that Satan was, indeed, at the time mentioned in the chapter before us, a high ruler in this world.

And what should we say to those who teach that the devil is now the chief ruler in this world? We should inform them that John 12:31; 16:11, indicate that the devil was "judged" and "cast out" by the death of Christ, because by his death redemption was wrought and reconciliation was assured. Nor is this all. When Jesus ascended to heaven he became king in fact, and the devil was not thenceforth designated as "the prince of this world," but simply as "the prince of the power of the air." (See Ephesians 2:2.)

But what should we say to those who teach that if Jesus had bowed down to Satan and worshiped him, and Satan had fulfilled his offer, then the world could have been redeemed without the necessity of Christ's death? We should say to them that they "do err, not knowing the scriptures." They forget that "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22.) They also forget I Timothy 2:5, 6, whereby we are informed that a "mediator" was necessary who had given himself "a ransom," or price, for all. Besides, if Jesus had bowed down to Satan, and worshiped him, he would have sinned against his Father, and could not have served as our "mediator." The prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Christ, and the entire New Testament, are against the idea that anything good could have been accomplished by Jesus, if he had yielded to Satan in any particular, for by so doing he would have offended his Father, and could not have become our Savior.

And what ought we to say to those who teach that Satan did not show Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," but that the statement here recorded, on that subject, is a form of rhetorical speech in which a part is taken for a whole? We ought to say that, in the absence of evidence, we should not be positive. Besides, Christ and Satan are both supernatural beings, and we ought not to decide in regard to that which they could see, or could not see.

What was taught by the doctrine—"Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"—as preached by John the Baptist, and Jesus? The teaching was, that the Jews were required to repent of the sins which they had committed against God, because the kingdom of heaven was about to be introduced. What was meant by the expression "kingdom of heaven," as used by John and Jesus? It is also called "kingdom of God." (See Mark 1:14.) Then by reading Mark 9:1, with

Acts 1:8, we may learn that "the kingdom of heaven," or "kingdom of God," which John, and Jesus, preached, as being at hand, was not established in the days of John the Baptist, nor even in the period of Christ's personal ministry. But the Savior promised that in the lifetime of some who were with him the kingdom of God should "come with power." Then Acts 1:8 indicates that when the "power" came upon the Apostles, as we learn in Acts 2nd chapter, then "the kingdom of God" did "come with power," and that when it was established it consisted of "the Church"—"the Church of God,"—"Churches of Christ"—as set forth in the New Testament.

We read in the 23rd verse of this chapter of "the gospel of the kingdom"—what does that mean? The word "gospel" means "good news," or "good tidings," and, therefore, this expression—"the gospel of the kingdom"—means the good news, or good tidings, concerning the kingdom. In Mark 1:14 we find this expression enlarged. Mark declares, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God." With all this before our minds we are enabled to understand what was meant by the mission of John the Baptist, as expressed in the prophetic command, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3.) John's mission was to prepare a people for Christ, and the mission of Christ, in his personal ministry, was to prepare a people for the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER V

What do we find in this chapter for our edification? We find a record of the beginning of Christ's sermon on a certain mountain, and in the first part of that sermon, as here recorded, we find blessedness pronounced on eight different classes of characters. This is followed by statements concerning the exalted, and saving, character, of Christ's disciples, likewise by statements concerning the fulfillment of the law, and the prophets, and of the differences between Christ's doctrine and the law as given by Moses. The chapter ends with certain declarations in regard to God's perfection, and the command that God's children should be perfect because their heavenly Father is perfect.

What may we safely say of the blessedness pronounced on certain characters in the beginning of this chapter? The sentence of blessedness, in every instance, is in opposition to the common conclusions of mankind. That is to say, mankind generally conclude that those are blessed who are self-suf-

ficient, and not such as are poor in spirit—that those are blessed who are jocular, and not such as mourn—that those are blessed who are ambitious, and not such as are meek—that those are blessed who feel satisfied with themselves, and not such as hunger and thirst after righteousness—that good collectors are blessed, and not such as are merciful to the poor—that the selfish are blessed, and not such as have their hearts purified by believing the gospel—that war-makers are blessed, especially if they make war and wage it successfully, and not peacemakers, especially if they humble themselves to have peace—finally, a very common conclusion is that those are blessed who haven't any enemies, and not such as are reviled and persecuted because of their righteousness. Is it possible for a religion which begins by contradicting the common conclusions of mankind, in eight prominent particulars, to become popular with the unconverted? No. What may we then say of those who try to popularize the gospel of Christ? They are trying to do that which is impossible. The gospel of Christ cannot be changed to suit popular notions without being compromised.

In what respect are Christ's disciples like "salt"? The effect of salt is to purify by separating impurities from that which should be preserved. It does not sweeten impurities, but eliminates them from that which should be sweetened, as when it draws blood out of meat. The discipleship required by the Savior is intended to have a similar effect among mankind to the extent that they are brought under its influence. The effect of Christ's disciples is divinely intended to be a separation, or elimination, of the good from the bad, in order that the good may be preserved.

In what respect are Christ's disciples like "light"? Paul says, "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light." (Ephesians 5:13.) That definition of light indicates that the disciples of Christ resemble light because they make things manifest, or evident. They are seen, and they enable mankind to see other characters, as they really are. They cannot be hid, and they prevent others from being kept hid. Are those true disciples of Christ who do not permit their light to shine among mankind? They are not.

What does Christ teach by saying that he came to "fulfil" the law, and the prophets? Romans 10:4 informs us that Christ is "the end of the law to every one that believes." How, then, ought we to regard those who teach that by fulfilling the law, and the prophets, the Savior means for his people to do that which the law and the prophets declare? We ought

to regard them as the Savior did the Sadducees when he said to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." (Matthew 22:29.) Luke 16:16, likewise Romans 10:4, are against the idea that to "fulfil" the law and the prophets means a continuance of obedience to them, and 2 Corinthians 3:1-13, with Hebrews 10:1-9, contradicts the idea that Christians should observe any part of the law, or the writings of the Old Testament prophets, not re-enacted in the New Testament, and thereby made a part of the New Covenant scriptures. Finally, the idea that to fulfil the promise of a promissory note means to pay it, and then continue to pay it year after year, needs only to be stated in order to be regarded as an absurdity. The Bible, common sense, and common justice, therefore, unite in condemning the idea that to fulfil the Jewish law means to continue its observance.

What is taught by the 19th verse of this chapter? It teaches what it says, namely, that those who would enter the kingdom of heaven would highly esteem all who observed the law and taught it, while it was in force ' but would lightly esteem all who would break the least command of the law, and teach others to break it, while it was in force. In other words, this verse states the estimate which Christians would place on those who disregarded, and on those who observed, the law while it was binding. But this verse does not state, nor even intimate ' that the breakers of the law would ever enter the kingdom of heaven, as that kingdom was then preached. The 20th verse makes this evident, for it declares that those who would not be any better than the law-breaking scribes and Pharisees should not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Was the Jewish law in force when Christ gave the instructions here recorded? It was. (See Matthew 8:4; 19:16-21; 23:1-3.) But the Jews, generally, had become empty formalists, in their observance of it, and those of them called "scribes and Pharisees" had added many things to the law. Therefore the Savior rebuked them for their unrighteousness, as he began to set forth his own doctrine.

What is set forth in the 21st and 22nd verses of this chapter? We find here a statement of the Jewish law in regard to murder, and of the danger, from a Jewish viewpoint, to any one guilty of murder. In contrast with such Jewish teaching the Savior set forth his doctrine on the same subject, which shows that the Gospel was intended to be much stricter, on this subject, than the law ever was. It shows that anger "without a cause," toward a brother, is as grievous an offense, in God's sight, under the Gospel, as actual murder was under the Jew-

ish law. This is more plainly set forth in 1 John 3:15, wherein the declaration is made, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."

What is taught in the 23rd and 24th verses? The importance of being on good terms with a brother, and the procedure which should be adopted in order to save a brother from the crime of being "angry . . . without a cause," is here set forth. Should this procedure be adopted by Christians? Yes. It is as binding on the disciples of Christ as is the procedure recorded in Matthew 18:15-17, and it requires that if the offended one does not go to the offender, and the real, or supposed, offender, learns that his brother is offended at him, he should go to him, and endeavor to be reconciled to him. Therefore, the Savior commands both the trespasser, and the one trespassed against, to go to each other, and try to secure a reconciliation. Matthew 18:15-17 indicates the result, in heaven, of that which transpires on earth between brethren in regard to offenses, and should impel all Christians to do their utmost to obey the Savior's teaching concerning offenses as well as with reference to all other subjects.

What is taught in the 25th and 26th verses? The teaching in those verses is against lawsuits, and it advises disciples to compromise rather than to go into a lawsuit with an adversary, or enemy. Does this mean that Christians should not, at any time, appeal to the civil law to protect them? It does not. On the contrary, we are informed that Paul, on a certain occasion said, "I appeal to Caesar." (Acts 25:11.) This means that he appealed to the judgment of a civil court, or chief judge, in a heathen empire, and he thereby set an example which we may follow in some circumstances.

What is taught by the 27th and 28th verses? The 27th verse states the Jewish law in regard to adultery, and the 28th states the Savior's law on the same subject. What is the difference between the Jewish law, and the law of Christ, concerning that crime? The former law seems not to have held mankind accountable for anything more than the actual offense, but the latter law holds mankind accountable for the adulterous thoughts which they indulge. This shows that the doctrine of Christ is much stricter, in regard to adultery, than the Jewish law was.

What were the 29th and 30th verses intended to teach? In them Christ commands his disciples to adopt the most extreme and severe means, even to the extreme of destroying a member of the fleshly body, in order to avoid staining the

soul with sin. In its general bearing this teaching requires Christians to separate from the nearest and dearest of associates, in order to avoid committing sin, but in its most definite bearing the teaching here is that Christians shall actually pluck out an eye, or cut off a hand. For instance, if a man should find that he could not look on a woman, without thinking of her in an unchaste manner, he would better destroy both of his eyes than to do such thinking. Again, if a man should find his physical strength, and temper, to be such that he would be impelled to fight, and knock down, his fellow men, when they would happen to stir his temper, then he would better cut off his right hand than to stain his soul by indulging in such misconduct.

And what may we say of the 31st and 32nd verses of this chapter? They set forth, in contrast from each other, the Jewish law, and the law of Christ, in regard to divorce. Which of the two laws may be regarded as the stricter, or more binding? The law of Christ is far more strict than the Jewish law was on that subject. According to the law of Christ when a man takes a woman to be his wife she must remain his wife while she continues chaste in her life. But suppose that the man becomes unchaste? Then, according to 1 Corinthians 6:16, he becomes the husband of another woman, and gives his former wife a scriptural reason for divorce from him. But if a man puts away his wife for an unscriptural cause, how does he thereby "cause her to commit adultery"? She will be guilty of that crime when she marries another man, and so will the man be guilty of it who marries her, because, in heaven's sight, he marries a woman who is the wife of another man, though she may be formally divorced from that man. This shows that an unchaste act on the part of either a husband, or a wife, is, in heaven's sight, a divorce, and is the only scriptural ground for a legal divorce. How, then, should preachers, and churches, of Christ, act with reference to men and women who are entangled in any, or in every, manner in regard to the marriage relation, but who desire to become Christians? They should follow the examples of the Apostles, and the churches of Christ, as their example is recorded in the New Testament. What is that example? Silence—utter silence—is the example which they have set before us, and which we should follow.

What is next set forth in this chapter? The doctrine of the Savior, in regard to swearing, in contradistinction from the Jewish doctrine on that subject, is next set forth. What is the difference between those doctrines? The Jewish law

commanded the Jew to swear by the name of God (Deuteronomy 6:13), and only condemned false swearing, and a failure to perform the obligation imposed by an oath. But Christ condemned all swearing. Does this mean that Christians should not make even a judicial oath? It does. What then may Christians substitute for a judicial oath of any kind? They may substitute an affirmation. What is the difference between an oath in civil law, and an affirmation in such law? An "oath" invokes the name of God, while an "affirmation" is made "under the pains and penalties of perjury," and does not mention the name of God. What is next recorded for our learning? The law of retaliation, or the punishment of an evil doer by inflicting on him the evil of which he was guilty, is first recorded. Then we find the Savior's doctrine recorded in opposition to that law. What is the bearing of the doctrine of the Savior on that subject? It teaches that Christians should not resist evil with evil, nor return evil for evil, as was authorized by the Jewish law, but that we should return good for evil. Should Christians always give, and lend, when asked to do so? Yes, but not to such an extent that they will fall under the condemnation of I Timothy 5: 8. What do we find next recorded in this chapter? We find a statement of the Jewish law in regard to love for a neighbor, and hatred for an enemy, and in contrast to that doctrine, in regard to an enemy, we find the Savior's teaching, with reference to enemies, followed by statements concerning the reason for that teaching. What is the reason upon which Christ founds his command that his disciples should love their enemies? He mentions God's goodness to his enemies as the reason. Is it possible for Christians to be perfect, even as God is perfect? Yes, in the sense that is here mentioned. God shows his perfection by his goodness toward his enemies, and we are to show our perfection by our goodness toward our enemies. But man's goodness is very defective in degree, extent, and constancy, when compared with the goodness of God. He is infinite, and, thus, is unlimited, in all his attributes, or powers, while we are finite, and, thus, are limited in all our powers. He is perfect as Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, while we, at our best, can only be perfect as dependent creatures, and beneficiaries. Therefore, man's goodness and love may be compared to the goodness and love of God in manner, but not in extent, degree, nor constancy.

CHAPTER VI

What instructions did the Savior give to his disciples in that part of his sermon which is now before us? First of all we find instructions against doing anything to be seen of men, and in favor of such secrecy as will avoid vain show. Then we find instructions concerning prayer, and find a form of prayer given, followed by instructions in regard to forgiving trespasses. Next we find instructions with reference to fasting, laying up earthly treasures, serving two masters, and anxiety about food and raiment. The chapter ends with the command to seek first the kingdom of God, and not to be anxious about the future affairs of this life, because "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

To whom, and to what period, did the instructions, found in this chapter, first apply? To Christ's disciples, in course of the period, then present, called Christ's personal ministry. Was the Jewish law in force at that time? It was. (See Matthew 8:4; 19:16-21; 23:1-3.) Did the Savior intend to provide, by special providence, for his disciples in course of his personal ministry? He did. (See Matthew 10:9-11.) Was that period to continue long? No. (See Luke 22:35-37.) What should we learn by considering that which the Savior says, in this chapter, against seeking "glory of men"? We should learn that seeking such "glory," by putting on of fine apparel, or any other unnecessary thing, by building fine houses for ourselves, or for the church, or seeking it by conducting the singing of the church, or any other part of the worship, in a man-pleasing manner, is under the Savior's condemnation. What effect should this have on those who adopt musical instruments in public worship in order to make it attractive to the unconverted? It should cause them to tremble with fear, for the Savior says "they have their reward," and this implies that they have it in this life, but will not be rewarded hereafter, except that they will receive, in the last day, what they will deserve. Can the 5th verse of this chapter be justly used against standing in time of prayer? No; for in Mark 11:25, we learn that the Savior endorsed standing in time of prayer. Can the 6th verse of this chapter be justly used against praying in public assembly? No; for, in Acts 4:23-31, we have an account of disciples praying publicly. What should we learn by considering the 7th verse of the chapter before us? We should learn to avoid offering long pray-

eis, especially in public, and specially learn to avoid "vain repetitions." What effect should this have on those religious persons whose church rituals require them to use the same forms of expression many times in the same prayer? It should cause them to turn from such churches, discard such rituals, and avoid making such prayers.'

Is the form of prayer, recorded in this chapter, appropriate for Christians to use? No. Why not? Because it lacks the name of Christ, it makes mention of a human standard by which the Lord is requested to measure forgiveness, and it makes mention of the kingdom of God as not established. In all these particulars the Savior's teaching, by the Holy Spirit, through the Apostles, is different. John 16:23, 24; Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17 indicate that all prayers of Christians should be offered, to the Father, in the name of Christ. Ephesians 4:32 indicates that Christians should measure their forgiveness, of each other, by the divine Father's forgiveness of them, and not ask the Father to measure his forgiveness of them by their forgiveness of each other. Then Mark 9:1; Colossians 1:13 indicate that the kingdom of God has come. In view of the scriptures just referred to the conclusion is unavoidable that Christians should not use all of the prayer which Christ gave to his disciples in course of his personal ministry. They cannot use it all as here given without ignoring the mentioned scriptures, and thereby bringing themselves under divine condemnation by omitting the name of Christ, and by asking the Lord to measure his forgiveness by their own forgiveness of others.

What should we say to those who deny that the mentioned prayer may be justly designated "the Lord's prayer"? We should say to them that they are too critical. The Lord is the author of it, and, in that sense, it is his prayer. We should not strain a scripture, nor unduly restrict a scripture, in order to criticize.

May not Christians use some parts of the mentioned prayer? They may use all parts of it which are in harmony with Christ's teaching, by the Holy Spirit, through the Apostles. For instance, Christians may pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (See Romans 15:30, 31; 2 Thessalonians 3:1, 2.) Moreover, this part of the prayer which Christ taught his disciples is against Christians encouraging the strong drink traffic, novel-reading, tobacco-using, theater-going, and card-playing, also against going to horse races, pool rooms, and dancing halls, or any other place of evil, even as spectators. For, if we should desire that our

heavenly Father will not lead us into temptation we should certainly avoid places of temptation, and should not lead any of our fellow mortals into temptation. This prayer is also against covetousness in business, and ambition for earthly honors, because such dispositions, generally, tempt men to be dishonest. It is likewise against all forms of extravagance, and gratifications of pride. Moreover, this prayer is in favor of taking a receipt for all monies paid, and taking liens on the property of those who owe us, because a lack of such receipts and liens often tempts persons to be dishonest. It is likewise against all secret societies because the sick benefits of some of them often tempt men to make pretense to sickness, while the help offered by them all, in case of trouble, often tempts members of them to think that they can do wrong, and yet escape the punishment that is threatened by the law of the land against their wrong doing.

What may we learn by considering the 16th, 17th and 18th verses of this chapter? Special periods of fasting, by individual Christians, are voluntary, and we may learn by the mentioned verses that all fasting which Christians do should be done secretly, and not for the purpose of attracting the attention of others.

Are the Savior's teachings, in this chapter, in regard to laying up treasures, against Christians being diligent in business, and economical in taking care of that which they have, so as to avoid being unable to provide for themselves, in case of sickness, or old age? No. On the contrary, Romans 12:11 commands Christians against slothfulness in business, while 1 Timothy 5:16 is against the church being "charged" with the care of helpless ones whenever it can be avoided.

But are not many Christians in need of the precaution, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth"? They are. Multitudes who obey the Gospel afterwards become lukewarm, then cold-hearted, and, finally, leave the church altogether, because of their earthly treasures. Many others remain formally connected with the church throughout life, though their hearts are firmly fixed on their earthly treasures. All such are in unutterable danger.

How then should Christians regard earthly riches? Just as Paul commanded in 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

What is the bearing of the 22nd and 23rd verses? The connection shows that an "evil" eye, as here mentioned, means a "double" eye, or one that sees things "double," and this is here spoken of as an illustration of those persons whose

minds are divided between God and this world. Those who try to serve both have a "double" eye because they have a divided purpose. (See James 1:8.) What is the correct application of the last part of this chapter? Its first application was to the disciples, in course of Christ's personal ministry. He intended to provide for them, and he did so. They went forth without purse, or haversack, or extra clothing, but were well supplied with all that they needed. (See Luke 22:35.) Then the second application of the last part is to all Christians, and should prevent them from being over-anxious about earthly affairs. The disciples whom Christ sent out were commanded not to take any "thought" about what they should eat, or drink, or wear. But Christians in the fulness of the Gospel Age are forbidden to be "slothful in business." Besides, Paul was somewhat anxious about a certain "cloak" which he had "left at Troas." (See 2 Timothy 4:13.) This shows that the command to "take no thought" in regard to temporal affairs, does not apply strictly to those who live this side of Christ's personal ministry, but was of special application to those who were Christ's disciples while he was on earth. The difference between Christ's personal ministry and his ministry through the Holy Spirit since he ascended to heaven must be understood by us if we would avoid confusion on that subject. The Savior indicates that difference in Luke 22:35-38. What he says in that scripture should be studied by all.

CHAPTER VII

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of the Savior's doctrine in regard to mankind sitting in "judgment" on each other, also in regard to an improper use of "holy things." Next we are informed of his doctrine in regard to mankind asking, seeking, and knocking for that which is good, and in connection, with that teaching, a comparison between good earthly parents, and the heavenly Father, is expressed. Then the doctrine is stated which is commonly designated, "The Golden Rule," after which mention is made of two gates as entrances to two ways which will have opposite endings. This is followed by mention of two classes of teachers, two classes of worshipers, and two classes of builders. The chapter ends with mention of the authoritative style of our Savior in his speaking.

Did the Savior by the first of this chapter intend to forbid his disciples exercising judgment, in every particular, and in every degree? No. (See John 7:24.) What then did he

teach by the first of this chapter? He must have taught his disciples were to refrain from passing swift, or severe, judgments, for in so doing they would often judge according to appearance only, and not according to facts. If a man ' is hasty, and severe, in his judgments against others, he will be hastily and severely judged by others. (See James 2:13.)

What do we next find in this chapter? We find, a precaution given, in regard to judging, or even censuring, another, and this precaution requires that we should correct ourselves concerning that with reference to which we censure others, before we censure them.

What is the application of the 6th verse? It requires that Christians shall not try to teach brutish persons in regard to religion, nor in anything else that is high and good, whether the brutishness is the result of anger, drunkenness, or any other baseness. Persons thus degraded will not appreciate Bible truth, any more than dogs will appreciate "holy things," or swine will appreciate "pearls." What is the bearing of the teaching here found concerning asking, seeking, and knocking? Its bearing is that in Christ's personal ministry, and in the fulness of the Gospel Age, the divine Father will not reject any who come to him aright. And what may we say of the 12th verse of this chapter? It sets forth the rule by which Christians should always measure themselves in dealing with others. And what would be the result among mankind if they would all observe this "rule" in their dealings with each other? They would not need many additional laws. Will strict observance of this "rule" be sufficient to save mankind? No. It only pertains to man in his dealings with his fellow mortals, and, therefore, does not deal with religious worship. Mankind are required to love God with all their hearts, as well as to love their neighbors, and their enemies. What may we learn by considering the 13th and 14th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the way of salvation is "narrow," and that only a "few" will "find it," while the way to destruction, or condemnation, is "wide," and that "many" will remain in it till the end of life, to their eternal ruin. Does the word "strait" in the verses now under examination mean the opposite of crooked? No. The opposite of crooked is another kind of "straight," and is expressed by a very different word from this word "strait." All readers who are not acquainted with the difference between these two words should examine them in their dictionary.

In the light of the verses now before us, what should we say to those who boast of being "liberal," and "broad-minded"? We should say that they differ from the Savior and his doctrine. What may we say of those who censure a certain church as teaching a "narrow" doctrine by which only a "few" will be saved? We may say that all such, indirectly, confess that the mentioned church is faithful to the Savior's teaching which declares that the way to life is "narrow," and that only a "few" will find it.

But why is "the way which leads to life" so "narrow" that only a "few" will find it? The first answer is, that the direct way to any place is always narrow, and that the right way to do anything is always one, and not several. The next answer is that false teachers so confuse the minds of mankind that only a "few" of them can find the narrow way which leads to life.

What does the Savior say, in this chapter, about false teachers? He speaks of "false prophets," compares them to "ravaging wolves," warns his disciples to "beware" of them, and declares that they shall be known by their "fruits." And what does this imply? It implies that a preacher may be known, in regard to doctrine, by the results of his teaching, and he may be known in life by the results of his example. If those who believe, and obey what a preacher proclaims, call themselves after his name, or after some other humanly given name, if they adopt a man-made creed, if they raise money, for religious purposes, by human devices, if they ignore the gospel ordinances, and speak of them as "non-essentials," then such believers are known to be "fruits" of "an evil tree." Moreover, if a preacher teaches mankind to observe the gospel ordinances, but advocates, or endorses, humanly arranged schemes for raising money, human devices in the worship, or man-made societies to do the work of the Church—such a preacher brings forth evil results because he tends to lead them away "from the simplicity that is in Christ." (See 2 Corinthians 11:3.)

What do we next find in this chapter? We find the Savior's description of two classes of worshipers. What is the difference between these two classes? The worshipers who make up one class worship by words without obedience, but the other class consists of those who worship by obedience as well as in words. And what may we learn by considering the case of those who worship in words only? We may learn that there are instances of self-deception in religion, so deep, and lasting, that they will not be entirely corrected until the final

judgment will be inflicted. As an illustration of this we may consider the rich man mentioned in the last of Luke 16th chapter. After his torment had been begun, he thought that his prayers might be answered, and the teaching of Christ concerning the insincere worshipers, as set forth in this chapter, indicates that many will remain, in some measure, deceived, until the final sentence will be passed on them, and they will be told by the Savior that he never "knew," or recognized, them as among his followers. But how could persons "cast out devils," and do "many wonderful works," in the name of Christ, without his approval or recognition? They could not really do miracles in his name without his approval, but all sectarians profess to think that they are doing "wonderful works," and many of them declare that miracles are wrought in answer to their prayers. All such are self-deceived. In the beginning of the Gospel Age the Lord wrought miracles only through those who obeyed him whole-heartedly, and he certainly does not work miracles now by the hands of those who obey him with partiality and indifference. If he should desire to work miracles at all in this part of the Gospel Age he would do so through those who obey him fully and whole-heartedly.

What do we next find in this chapter? We find a record of two classes of builders. What is the difference between them as here stated? Those who make up the first class consist of such as obey the Savior's teaching, and, as a result, will be safe when the final test of their spiritual condition will come upon them, while those who make up the second class consist of the disobedient, and who, as a result, will be overthrown when the final test will come upon them.

What impression did the Savior's teaching, in his sermon, on a certain mountain, make on his hearers? It astonished them. What may we learn by considering the fact that they were astonished? We may learn that they must have heard it, and, therefore, we must conclude that though that sermon Was addressed to the disciples, yet it was spoken in the hearing of "the multitudes." And why were the multitudes astonished? Because of the "authority" by which the Savior spoke.

Is "authority" shown in all the Savior's teaching? It is, and the authority manifested in his teaching is an evidence of his superiority which many of his hearers then acknowledged, and which all careful readers of his teaching have since acknowledged.. When certain of his enemies sent "officers" to take him, those officers declined to lay hands on him, and

said, "Never man spake like this man." See John 7:45, 46. Similar testimony has been given by all who have read his teachings with care. The authority with which he spoke proclaims his divinity, and the dignity of his speeches declares their divine origin. What may we say of the Savior's sermon which we have considered? We may safely pronounce it the greatest speech ever delivered on earth. When it is considered in its bearings on the Jewish law, on the period called Christ's personal ministry, and then on the fulness of the Gospel Age, it may certainly be declared more comprehensive in its teaching than any other speech that was ever delivered in the hearing of man. In that sermon the Savior set forth the principles which should control mankind during the Gospel Age; he declared the integrity and certainty of the Jewish law; he contrasted his teaching with that law; he rebuked the hypocrisy of the Jews; he gave a form of prayer to his disciples; he taught them in regard to forgiving offenses, also in regard to fasting, laying up treasures, serving two masters, and reasons for having confidence in God's providence; he likewise taught them in regard to exercising judgment on their fellow mortals, the importance of exercising care to be clear of great errors before criticising others with reference to smaller ones; the reason that care should be exercised in approaching mankind with sacred things; the certainty of divine promises being fulfilled; the resemblance between earthly fathers and the divine Father, and a statement of the "Golden Rule." Then in conclusion, he taught concerning two gates, two ways, two destinies, two classes of teachers, two classes of worshipers, and two classes of builders, setting forth the truth which mankind specially need to know in regard to. each of those several classes which he designated, and delineated, for the instruction of his disciples, and for the edification of all classes, and conditions, of mankind, during all generations till the close of time. Therefore this sermon may be safely declared to be the greatest that was ever sounded on human ears, or made known to the mind of man.

CHAPTER VIII

What is recorded in this chapter for our learning? We find here a record of miracles, and in connection with that record we find certain speeches of our Savior. Five special miracles are here mentioned, namely, that of cleansing a leper, healing a centurion's servant, giving health to Peter's wife's mother, stilling a tempest, and casting evil spirits out of two men, be

sides a general statement, of the Savior's miracles, as found in the 16th verse. What may we learn by considering the record, as given in the first part of this chapter, of Christ's cleansing a leper? We may learn that the Savior had power over diseases that were incurable by human means; also that the Jewish law was in force at the time Christ exercised his power in behalf of a certain leper, and that he commanded the mentioned leper to observe that law in regard to his cleansing. See Leviticus 14th chapter. When Christ had commanded him to be clean he was at once actually cleansed; yet, according to the Jewish law, he needed to be, legally, cleansed, or declared clean in a legal manner, or by a legal process. Therefore it was necessary for the leper, of whom we read in this chapter, to be sent to the Jewish priest, and through him to be cleansed according to law. What is set forth for our learning in the record here given of a certain centurion, and his sick servant? Faith, and authority, are the subjects that are here set forth. The centurion—commander of a hundred men—as here mentioned, showed perfect faith in the Savior's power to heal his sick servant, even without seeing him, and that centurion showed that he had a clear idea of "authority." He was "under authority," and in authority. When he told a man to do anything he did it. This is the meaning of "authority" and from this we should learn what is meant by divine authority. Those who recognize Christ's authority never inquire whether something else will not do as well as that which he commands, neither do they try to find an easier way to obey him than is indicated in the New Testament. What is taught by the 10th verse of this chapter? It teaches that the Savior had not found as much faith in any Jew as he had found in that centurion, though he was not of the Jewish race, but was a soldier in the army of heathen Rome, and a commander in that part of the Roman army which was then established at Jerusalem. After commenting on the centurion's faith the Savior spoke of many who would be gathered from other nations, into "the kingdom of God," while the Jews, who were "the children" of the Jewish kingdom, should be thrust out. See Romans 11:13-25. Unbelieving Jews are now out of the kingdom of God, and will finally be thrust into outer darkness, if they do not repent. What may we learn by considering the 14th and 15th verses? The completeness of the Savior's cures is here indicated.

And what is indicated by the 16th and 17th verses? We find here an indication with reference to the great number of the miracles performed by the Savior. We find also that he was a miracle worker according to prophecy.

What is next set before us? An interview between Christ and a certain scribe, which is concluded with a statement of Christ's poverty, likewise an interview between Christ and one of his disciples in regard to burying a dead father, which is concluded with a statement which implies that those who were "dead" to his teaching should attend to the burial of the dead body of a man, but those who had learned of him should follow him, and "preach the kingdom of God." See Luke 9:59, 60.

Does the case just considered teach, or encourage, indifference, on the part of children, toward their parents? No; but it does teach that the divine call to preach the kingdom of God was of more importance to a man, who received it, than any earthward work to which others could attend. This indicates that the preacher of Christ should not turn aside from his preaching to do that which can be done, equally well, by someone else, except when his own temporal support, or the support of those dependent on him, requires him to do so.

What special value to us is the record of the tempest, which affrighted Christ's disciples, and which was stilled by his command? The assurance that Christ can control the forces of nature, is the first lesson, and the second is the indication here given that fearfulness, on the part of Christ's disciples, is always a result of their weak faith. But how may our faith become strong and remain thus? By studying the Bible. See John 20:30, 31; Acts 17:11, 12.

And what may we learn by considering the last miracle recorded in this chapter? We may learn that Christ had power over evil spirits; likewise that evil spirits knew him, spoke of him as "the son of God," feared him, and understood that he had power to control them. What impression should this make upon us? It should cause us to rejoice in the assurance that our Savior is superior to evil spirits, and that they can not harm us, except as he may suffer them to do so for our good, even as he did in the case of Paul. See 2 Corinthians 12:7.

And what should be our assurance when we consider all the miracles recorded in this chapter? We should feel assured that the Savior is able to control all diseases, and all the forces in nature, as well as all evil spirits, and that he only

suffers them to affect us to accomplish our good. See Romans 8:28, 35-39; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 12:5-11; James 1:2-4.

What may we conclude in regard to those who besought Jesus "that he would depart out of their coasts"? They did not know their best friend, and desired him to leave them. This is a common weakness. Mankind, generally, misjudge their best friends and turn from them in order to follow their worst enemies. As a result, mankind are, generally, deceived, and betrayed, in one, or more, departments of life. Many of them are deceived and betrayed in all departments and directions, so that their existence is a failure for time, and will be in eternity.

CHAPTER IX

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed in regard to the Savior healing a man afflicted with palsy, or paralysis, after he had forgiven his sins, and in regard to his calling Matthew, who afterwards wrote the record, we are now considering, of the Savior's life in this world. We are next informed of an interview which the Savior had with certain Jews, called Pharisees, and then of an interview he had with the disciples of John the Baptist. This is followed by a record of an urgent call by "a certain ruler" in behalf of his daughter, also by a record of his healing a woman who "touched the hem of his garment," and of his raising the ruler's daughter to life sometime after she had died. The latter part of this chapter makes mention of the Savior's cure of two blind men, of a dumb man, possessed of an evil spirit, also of his "teaching" and "preaching," and of his "healing every sickness, and every disease among the people," and it ends with a statement of the Savior's emotions, and speech, when he saw the multitude "scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd."

Were sins forgiven before Christ died? Yes. That which the Savior said., on that subject, to the palsied man, mentioned in this chapter, clearly indicates that sins were forgiven by the Savior before he died for sins. He had "power on earth to forgive sins," and he exercised it in the case of the palsied man. Was such exercise of power contrary to Hebrews 9:22, or any other scripture? It was not. In Revelation 13:8 we learn that, in the divine purpose, Christ was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and, as that purpose could not fail, Christ was given "power on earth to forgive sins" before he was actually slain.

What evidence did those who brought the palsied man to the Savior, give of their faith? Mark 2:1-4 clearly implies that they showed their faith by that which they did.

What is meant by the expression "receipt of custom," as found in the 9th verse? It means the place where tariff, on imported goods, was paid. Chapter 4:13 informs us that Jesus had previously dwelt in Capernaum, a sea-port city, and in the first verse of the chapter now before us we are informed that he "came into his own city," which was so called because he had lived there. As Capernaum was a sea-port city it was a place where tariff on imported goods was received, and the Savior found Matthew at the place which was called "receipt of custom."

What may we learn by considering the Savior's answer to the Pharisees who criticized him for eating with "publicans and sinners"? We may learn that sick persons needed a "physician," and that "mercy" was of more value before God than "sacrifice." Is the same true in the fulness of the Gospel Age? Yes. This is indicated by Paul's prescription for a certain preacher (1 Timothy 5:23), and by the declaration of another apostle that "mercy rejoiceth against judgment." (See James 2:13.) The former scripture shows that a sick man should have medicine, and the latter shows God's regard for "mercy."

Who were the "publicans and sinners," mentioned in this chapter? The "publicans" were tax-gatherers for the Roman government, under which the Jews, in Palestine, were held, for many years, including the time of our Savior's personal ministry on earth. The "sinners" were those who were not members of any one of the Jewish sects, and, therefore, were regarded as non-professors, or sinners.

What may we learn by studying the interview, between Christ and the disciples of John the Baptist, as recorded in this chapter? We may learn that the Savior referred to a custom at marriages, among the Jews, to illustrate that it was not appropriate for his disciples to fast while he was with them, but that fasting, on their part, would be appropriate when he should be taken from them. We may learn also by the reference here made to "an old garment" and "new cloth," likewise to "old bottles" and "new wine," that the Savior did not regard it appropriate to impose an old custom on the men, who should be chief, among mankind, in advocating the new religion which he came to establish. This implies that the Gospel should not, in any measure, be a patchwork of Jewish customs and New Testament requirements.

What may we safely say of all the miracles reported in the latter part of this chapter? They indicate the greatness and goodness, kindness and considerateness, of the Lord Jesus Christ in behalf of mankind.

And what may we say of the Savior's instructions in regard to increasing the number of laborers for the Lord's harvest field? It was the divine plan, at that time, and, in the absence of contrary instructions, it is the divine plan now. In 2 Timothy 2:2 we may learn something more on this subject. But Christians should daily pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into his harvest field, assured that those whom the Lord will, in his good providence, move to enter that field will be of the right kind.

What may we say of the idea that college buildings should be erected with money which should have been put into the Lord's treasury, and then that preachers should be called from the Lord's harvest field to teach students, in secular learning, in order to prepare them to preach the Gospel? It is strictly a human plan, which originated in the falling away "from the simplicity that is in Christ"; it disregards the divine plan, or, at least, underestimates that plan for increasing the number of laborers for the divine field; it is divisive in results, and brings its advocates under divine condemnation.

CHAPTER X

What is set forth in this part of Matthew's record of Christ's words and works? An account of the first commission he gave to his Apostles is here set forth, and then we find an account of his speech to them before he sent them forth.

What may we learn by considering the restrictions given in this commission? They clearly show that the personal ministry of Christ was intended to be chiefly confined to the Jewish people, especially to those of that people whom he called "the lost sheep of the house of Israel"—those who had not been gathered into sectarian folds, and would acknowledge their need of a divine Shepherd.

What is meant by the word "scrip," as mentioned in the 10th verse of the Common Version of this chapter of the Sacred Text? 1 Samuel 17:40 informs us that the word "scrip," as used in ancient times, meant a shepherd's bag, or bag to put victuals in.

Did the Savior promise to provide for the temporal welfare of the preachers whom he sent forth to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom? He did, and that which he promised was

fulfilled. But when the time came for his personal ministry to be ended he gave instructions to them which had another bearing. See Luke 22:35-38.

What may we learn by considering the 11th verse of this chapter? We may learn that Christ intended that his preachers should not be reproached by staying with unworthy, or disreputable, persons, and that which he said to his first preachers, on that subject, should not be forgotten by his preachers in the fulness of the Gospel Age. Much depends on the reputation of those with whom a preacher of Christ makes his home.

What does the word "salute" mean, as found in the 12th verse? It means "to greet, welcome, express one's good wishes," and required that the Apostles should speak, in a friendly manner, to the persons whom they found in any house they entered.

What is meant by the 13th verse? It means that the Savior gave his Apostles power to bestow "peace" on the persons who dwelt in any house that was worthy to receive them. This does not mean the spiritual peace which results from the forgiveness of sins, but "peace" in regard to earthward affairs. Christ was the only one, then on earth, who was divinely authorized to forgive sins, and, thereby, bestow spiritual peace.

What will be the final condition of those who rejected the Apostles and their words? They will be under greater condemnation than the ancient Sodomites will suffer. Why? Because they will have sinned against spiritual light in a greater degree than did the Sodomites.

What is meant by the 16th verse? Serpents, generally, get away from danger, and the 23rd verse indicates that Christ intended that his disciples should get away from danger. They were required to flee from persecution, live as long as they could, and preach the Gospel wherever they went. Besides, they were required to avoid injuring others, and, thus, be as harmless as doves. In commenting on this doctrine some one has written these lines: That thou mayest injure none, dove-like be, And serpent-like, that none may injure thee.

What is indicated in the 19th and 20th verses of this chapter? Verbal inspiration is indicated. Is such inspiration taught by other scriptures? It is, in both the Old Testament and the New. Over seventy times Moses said, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." Then Moses professed to give

the exact words of God. Besides, the Old Testament prophets, generally, began their revelations by declaring, that the word of the Lord came unto them, and then they proceeded to give the exact words which they said the Lord gave unto them. This being true, it is evident that the writings of Moses, and of the other prophets, must be accepted as verbally inspired of God, or, must be rejected, as coming from those who were wholly unreliable. If the Old Testament writers, who professed direct, divine, inspiration, were not inspired, they were miserable dupes, or reckless liars, and, therefore, all their writings are utterly unreliable. The same is true in regard to all the New Testament writers. Their verbal inspiration, by the Spirit of God, is either directly asserted, certainly implied, or clearly indicated. They knew the very word with which their inspiration began, and the word with which it ended. See I Corinthians 7:10-12. In view of all this, what may we say of those who profess to regard the Bible as a good book, but deny its verbal inspiration even in those particulars wherein such inspiration is declared? We may safely say that all such professors, by implication, affirm that an evil tree can bring forth good fruit, for they profess to think that men, who falsely pretended to be inspired, produced a good book.

What is indicated by the verses in this chapter which mention persecution? These verses indicate that those persons who would not accept the teaching of Christ would, in many instances, become enemies to all who would become his followers, and, as a result, would persecute them. The Savior informed his disciples that, as his enemies had persecuted him, so they would persecute them. The 24th and 25th verses of this chapter indicate the answer which Christ's disciples should now give to those who speak of them as "fogies," "mossbacks," "back numbers antis," and by other reproachful names. What, is meant by the word "Beelzebub"? It means "fly God," or "God of the fly," and was applied to the Savior by certain religious Jews, called "Pharisees." A record of the application of that name to him is found in Matthew 12:24. What may we learn by considering the 26th and 27th verses? Those verses inform us that Christ taught the same doctrine which Solomon declared in Ecclesiastes 12:14. What effect should that doctrine have on all mankind? It should cause them all to remember the words of Hagar in the wilderness, "Thou God seest me." (Genesis 16:13.) And those words should prevent, all who remember them, from doing wrong.

Then, by remembering the 139th Psalm, all mankind should be kept from cherishing evil thoughts and feelings.

And what should we learn by meditating on the 28th, 29th, 30th and 31st verses of this chapter? The divine Father's care over his Son's disciples is taught, and his care over all his children is intimated. Then by the 28th verse we may learn that the body and the soul of man are very different. The word "soul" is often used in scripture in the sense of life—animal life. But when contrasted with the body it is used in the sense of "spirit." In that sense it is used in the 28th verse of this chapter, and should be sufficient to close the mouths of those gainsayers who teach that mankind are only well-mixed bodies, and that their souls consist of common air. In the scripture now under consideration, the soul of man is spoken of as an entity—as a being—which has life separate from the body, and may have life independent of the body—even when the body is dead. This verse is in harmony with Zechariah 12:1, which declares that the spirit of man is a distinct, divine, formation within him. These two scriptures (Zechariah 12:1 and Matthew 10:28, are, in themselves, sufficient to confute, and confound, every materialist who professes to believe the Bible. Moreover, the only reason why any one, who honestly professes to believe the Bible, can be a materialist, commonly called "a soul-sleeper," is because that one does not consider the mentioned scriptures in the fulness of their meaning."Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God"—this answer of the Savior, to certain ancient materialists, explains the existence of materialistic notions in all ages. Those who hold such notions "err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." The effect of such notions is to beget indifference to the Bible, in a majority of those who adopt them, except that they read it for the purpose of controversy, and to pervert true believers in regard to the Bible.

What convictions should be produced by the 32nd and 33rd verses? All who consider those verses aright should be convinced, and will be convinced, that Christ requires all responsible human beings to confess their faith in him, in order to find acceptance in his sight, and to be confessed by him before his Father in heaven. Who axe they that "deny" Christ before men? First, those who deny him in both words and works; second, those who deny him in works, while professing, in words, to know him. See Titus 1:16.

What teachings are found in the 34th, 35th, and 36th verses of the chapter before us? A sword is an emblem of division,

strife, contention, and Christ knew that his teachings would produce division, and its consequences, because some would accept them, but others —would reject them. He knew also that those who would reject his teachings would, in many instances, become enemies of those who would accept them. Thus it has been; thus it is; and thus it will be. Many persons who reject Christ seem to be friendly to his people, but if one of his people does wrong, there will, in many instances, be a secret rejoicing on the part of those persons. This proves that all of that class are, in reality, enemies to those who follow Christ, and, thus, are enemies to his Church. What do the 37th, 38th and 39th verses teach? They inform 'US that Christ knew the danger to which many would be exposed by their love of fleshly relations, also by their own selfishness, and their love of their life here on earth, Against all this he warned them, and in the 39th verse he indicated that those who would find, or save their earth-life, by denying him, would lose, or fail—to receive, eternal life.; likewise, that those who would lose, or forfeit, their earth-life, for his sake, would find, or receive, eternal life. Thus the word "life" is used in a two-fold sense in the verse before us. It is used in an earthly sense, and in a spiritual sense. And what may we learn by considering the concluding verses of this chapter? We may learn what it meant to receive the Apostles when they were sent forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom. What is meant by the expressions "a prophet's reward," and "a righteous man's reward"? I Kings 17:10-16; 2 Kings 4:1-37, inform us that a prophet's reward consisted of such a reward as a true prophet could bestow. Who were meant by the expression "one of these little ones"? Matthew 18:6 and Mark 9:41 inform us that it referred to all those who believed in Christ, but it had its first reference to the Apostles. What was then true is true now, and will be to the end. See Matthew 25:40.

But is the reward which a prophet of God could bestow, or which a righteous man can bestow, the only reward to which the Savior referred in the 41st verse of this chapter? Matthew 25:31-46 intimates that more than has been thus far mentioned depends on treating Christ's disciples aright. But the full meaning of that scripture will be considered when the 25th chapter of this record will be under examination.

CHAPTER XI

What are the outlines of information, in this chapter, concerning Christ? A statement is first made of the fact that after

Christ had concluded his instructions to his twelve disciples, he proceeded to preach and teach, and a statement is next made of his interview with two disciples of John the Baptist; likewise a statement of his interview with his own disciples concerning John the Baptist. Then we are informed of what the Savior said of those who criticized John and himself, of what he said in upbraiding certain cities, of his prayer to his Father in regard to revelations made to his disciples, and of statements he made in connection with his prayer. The chapter ends with his invitation to weary ones. Why did John the Baptist send to Christ inquiring whether he was the one who should come? We are not informed, and would better not speculate. Those who think that John was, personally, in doubt on the subject have a very low estimate of his constancy, but those who think that John desired his disciples to have Christ's own statement, concerning his Messiahship, take a more scriptural view. But, whatever the correct view may be, we should be thankful that John the Baptist sent to the Savior an inquiry on that subject, for the answer given to him is very valuable to us. It shows that belief in Christ's divinity is divinely intended to be produced in mankind by the miracles which Christ wrought. This is in harmony with John 20:30, 31. Is there anything unusual in the style of our Savior in that which he said to his disciples concerning John the Baptist? Yes, it is highly rhetorical, and strongly suggestive. His three-fold inquiry in regard to that which his disciples went out into the wilderness to see suggests something contrary to the truth, in order that the truth, on the subject, might be more impressive, when expressed, than it could otherwise have been made. Is this style of speech lawful for us? Yes, and it is sometimes used with excellent effect. What may we learn by considering the 11th verse of this chapter? We may learn that John the Baptist was as great as any Old Testament prophet, yet, as he was destined to die before the kingdom of heaven, which he preached, would be established on earth, therefore he would not be as great as the least who would enter that kingdom, because even the least one would be a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty, having Christ as an elder brother. Such a relationship to God and Christ is higher than John the Baptist ever enjoyed. See 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18; Hebrews 2:11-13. What may we say of the idea that Christ, in the 11th verse of this chapter, meant to teach that John was less, than the least of the Apostles, or the New Testament prophets? We may say that the

"least" in Matthew 25:40, 45 is an index to the contrary, for that word, as used in those scriptures, clearly shows its application to all who are in the kingdom of heaven. What is taught by the statement that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence" as is recorded in the 12th verse? John the Baptist preached the kingdom of heaven, and so did the Savior, and his Apostles. All preachers of the kingdom, as a doctrine, represented the kingdom which they preached. The mistreatment which those preachers received indicated the disposition of those who mistreated them in regard to the kingdom which they made known in their preaching. John the Baptist had already suffered violence, and had been put into prison "by force." In view of all this the Savior said "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Does the 14th verse mean that John the Baptist was really the Elias, or Elijah, of the Old Testament? No, but the angel Gabriel declared to John's father that the son who should be born to him should go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elias." See Luke 1:17. Then in John 1:21 we learn that when John the Baptist was asked whether he was Elias, he answered, "I am not." This shows that he was "the Elias that was to come" only because he came "in the spirit and power of Elias." What is meant by the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th verses of this chapter? In those verses the Savior set forth the disposition of those who criticized him, and John the Baptist. He likened them to children who would complain to other children because those others had not danced to their music, nor lamented to their mourning. Such procedure, on the part of those children, illustrated the disposition of those who complained of John because he did not eat with them, and then of Christ because of the company he kept. The same disposition is still shown by many wrong-doers, especially those who make religious pretensions, but have adopted wrong doctrines, practices, methods of life. They try to defend themselves by complaining of others. Thus it is with those who oppose New Testament disciples. They complain of them because they do not conform to their arrangements. They do not censure such disciples because they don't read their Bible, and pray, and try to live right, but their censure is because they do not endorse musical instruments in worship, endorse man-made societies in religious work, nor festivals, with other carnal devices, to raise money for religious purposes. Thus it is that they are "like children, sitting in the

markets, and calling to their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented."

What is meant by the declaration, "But wisdom is justified of her children"? It means that wisdom's ways, or the course pursued by wisdom, will always be justified, sanctioned, defended, by those who possess wisdom. In other words, common sense will always cause persons to justify any course of conduct which is according to common sense.

What may we learn by considering the Savior's words against certain Jewish cities named in the 21st and 23rd verses of this chapter? We may learn, and should learn, that mankind are accountable, before God, according to the light which they are permitted to enjoy. The Jewish cities, which the Savior censured, were not, likely, as immoral as the others that he mentioned, but they had sinned against light, truth, knowledge, more grievously than those others had, and therefore were under greater condemnation. Moreover, they will be under greater condemnation, than those other cities, in the last day—the day of Judgment. What impression should this make on our minds? We should fear, and tremble, by reason of the great responsibility resting upon us, by reason of the opportunities we have of obtaining light. We live in the Gospel Age, in a land of Bibles, with Gospel light and privileges. Therefore, if we do not become Christians, and live the life of Christians, then we shall be under greater condemnation, in the Judgment, than the people of heathen lands will be. Our light is greater than theirs, our responsibility is greater, and, if we do not serve the Lord, our condemnation will be greater.

What is meant by the expression, "exalted unto heaven," as found in the 23rd verse? Chapter 4:13 of this book informs us that Christ, for a time, lived in Capernaum—made his home there—and certainly the place where the Son of God had lived was very highly exalted, and, in one sense, was closely related to heaven. On the same principle, it is true that any place where a church of Christ is established, or where a true Christian lives, is highly exalted, and the people of that place have special opportunities of learning the truth, and, as a result, have special responsibilities resting on them.

What is taught by the 25th and 26th verses? They teach that Christ thanked his Father because it had seemed good in his sight to withhold his revelation of his truth from "the wise and prudent," of that period of time, and had revealed that truth to those who were "babes" in understanding. In thus

speaking the Savior referred to the fact that ignorant men had been chosen to preach the gospel of the kingdom, while those who were wise in their own eyes had been passed over. Not one of their number had been chosen to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

What may we say of the invitation set forth in the last part of this chapter? It reveals the desire of Christ for the salvation of mankind, also the fact that salvation will give them rest for their souls, and that the requirements which Christ makes of them are easy and light. If mankind do not find these requirements easy and light, the reason is found in their own lack of conversion to Christ. All who become wholehearted Christians find that the Gospel requirements are light, especially when compared with the oppressive service which sin requires.

CHAPTER XII

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed that Christ and his disciples, on a sabbath day, went through a grain field, and his disciples ate of the grain, were criticized by Pharisees for so doing on the sabbath, and were defended by Christ. We next are informed that Christ went into a Jewish place of worship called "synagogue," that he healed a man there who had a withered hand, also that he defended himself for so doing on the sabbath, after which we read of certain Pharisees holding a council against Jesus for the purpose of destroying him, that he knew of it, left that place, was followed by multitudes, and, in order to fulfil a certain prophecy concerning himself, charged the multitudes not to make him known. We are also informed that the Savior healed a person who was blind and dumb, and possessed of an evil spirit, by reason of which some were amazed, while others charged that he cast out evil spirits by the power of the devil, which charge was answered by the Savior, and after so doing he made mention of pardonable sins and blasphemies, and then he spoke of blasphemy which would be unpardonable. We are next informed in regard to certain persons wishing to see a sign from Christ, and his answer, followed by certain remarks which he made in regard to an unclean spirit, in order to illustrate what should befall that evil generation. The chapter ends with mention of Christ's mother, and his brethren, desiring to speak with him, and what he said concerning those who were his brother, and his sister, and his mother. Does the word "corn," as mentioned in the first verse of this

chapter, mean any particular kind of grain? No. It meant "grain" in general, except maize, or Indian corn, which was not grown in Palestine. What may we learn by the Savior's defense of his disciples, when they were accused by the Pharisees, in regard to violating the sabbath? We may learn, that mercy was more acceptable to God, than strictness of obedience, to certain laws, in the Jewish Age. David, when hungry, was justified in eating food intended only for priests, and Christ's disciples, when hungry, were justified in rubbing out heads of grain, and eating the grain, even on the sabbath day. But what is meant by the priests profaning the sabbath, as mentioned in the 5th verse? Numbers 28:9 also John 7:22, 23, gives information on this subject. Those scriptures inform us that the law concerning the sabbath was not as strong as the law concerning the daily offering nor as strong as the law concerning circumcision, for the law in regard to the sabbath yielded to both of those other laws. What is taught by the 8th verse? It teaches that Christ is master, and thus ruler, of the sabbath day; therefore the sabbath day must yield to him. What should we say to those who declare that "the Lord's day," mentioned in Revelation 1:10, is the Jewish sabbath, and urge the 8th verse of this chapter as proof? We should inform them that in this very chapter Christ taught that the Jewish sabbath was less strict than the command to circumcise a Jewish child, and less strict than the command to make the Jewish daily offering, and even less sacred than hunger on the part of Christ's disciples. To this we should add that it was less sacred than the health of a man's hand, and the life of a sheep. Then we should show by Deuteronomy 5:15 that the Jewish sabbath was enjoined upon the Jew because he had been delivered from Egypt, even as circumcision was enjoined upon him because he was a descendant of Abraham. See Genesis 17:13, 14. Next we should inquire for the scripture to show that either Abraham's circumcision, or the Jewish sabbath, was ever imposed on any one except Jews, and those Gentiles who became members of the Jewish commonwealth. Finally, we should show that the most important day, in regard to the Gospel, is the day when Christ arose from the dead, and, therefore, this is the day which is best entitled to be called "the Lord's day."

What may we learn by considering the fact that Christ charged certain persons, whom he healed, that they should not make him known, and the prophecy which he thereby fulfilled? In chapter 16:20, we learn that the Savior charged his own disciples that they should not make him known, and in chap-

ter 17:9 we learn that the vision of transfiguration which Peter, James and John saw "on the mountain," was not to be made known till after his resurrection. This indicates that the time had not come, to declare him the Messiah, when he charged those whom he had healed and his own disciples not to make him known. The Jewish idea of the Messiah was that he should be a temporal king, and if the fact, that Jesus was the real Messiah had been received by many persons he would have been hindered in his mission of mercy among the poor. John 6:15 gives evidence in this direction. The miracle wrought, in feeding "about five thousand," was sufficient to convince some that he was "that prophet that should come into the world," and they were disposed to "take him by force to make him a king." This indicates the reason he did not wish his works to be widely reported at that time, and why the prophet Isaiah spoke of him as one who should be quiet and gentle till the time would come for him to execute judgment. His gentleness is poetically mentioned in the 20th verse, as being such that he would not break a "bruised reed," nor quench a "smoking flax," which indicates that he would not destroy the least strength, nor quench the least spark of desire, to do right. This shows that Christians should be gentle in their dealings with all who manifest a desire to do right in any measure, or degree, and that they should avoid the disposition which will cut off, or crush, a right desire.

What may we learn by considering the account, given in this chapter, of Christ healing the man who was blind and dumb, and of the charge certain religious Jews made against Christ, and of his defense against that charge? We may learn that Satan, at that time, had "a kingdom," and that certain religious persons, in order to damage the Savior's influence against that kingdom, perversely charged that Christ cast out evil spirits by the power of the devil, which was contrary to common sense and common honesty. The Savior's defense against that charge is clear, distinct, conclusive, sublime. In course of that defense he intimated that those who had charged him with casting out devils by the prince of the devils, had, thereby, been guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which was an unpardonable sin. This intimation is made clear in Mark 3:29, 30, which plainly declares that those Jews had committed the unpardonable sin "because they said he hath all unclean spirit." Does the 32nd verse of this chapter imply that forgiveness will be offered to some in the world to come? The translation of that Verse, as found in the Common Version of the Sacred

Text, thus implies, or, at least, thus intimates. But the Greek word here translated by the word "world" is not the one which refers to the material world, as its primary meaning, but it is the word which means primarily "a period of time of significant character, life, an era, an age." Therefore the meaning of the last part of the verse under consideration is that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit should not be forgiven either in the Jewish Age which was then in existence, or in the Gospel Age, which was about to be introduced. Or, to express the same thought more definitely, such blasphemy should not be forgiven either in course of Christ's personal ministry, as a period of time, nor in course of his ministry through the Spirit, which should succeed his personal ministry!

And what shall we say of the 36th verse of this chapter? The connection shows that the Savior was not speaking of "idle," empty, or unmeaning, words, but of false, or injurious, words. In harmony with the connection, in which this verse is found, we may learn, by examination, that the word here translated "idle," also means "injurious," and that seems to be the idea in this connection. Yet Christians should remember that all idle or unprofitable words are injurious to some one. Those who use them are, generally, most injured by them.

What may we learn by considering the 38th, 39th, and 40th verses? We may learn that Christ would not work miracles to gratify the curiosity of certain Jews, though they were prominent Jews—scribes and Pharisees. We may learn also that those who teach that Christ was crucified on Friday make a mistake. If he was put to death on Friday, then the prophecy of Christ that he should be "three nights in the heart of the earth" has failed. That doctrine is a part of the false teaching of the apostate church, and should be rejected by all Bible readers.

And what shall we say of the 41st and 42nd verses? They imply that mankind will be judged according to the light which they are permitted to have, and they explain I Corinthians 6:3, 4, for they indicate the principle by which mankind will be finally judged. Those who obey Christ, in the midst of a perverse generation, show what others might do. On this principle the men of Nineveh, and the Queen of Sheba, will condemn the generation which heard Christ, and rejected him, because the men of Nineveh showed what could be done, by way of repentance, even by those who were heathen, and the Queen of Sheba showed what could be done, even by a heathen, in seeking after knowledge.

What was the account, given in this chapter, of an unclean spirit taking seven other spirits, and returning to the place whence he was cast out, intended to teach? It was intended to teach that if a man, out of whom an unclean spirit was sent, kept himself "empty," he would not make use of his opportunity, and would be liable to be again taken possession of, and in a manner which would make his last state worse than the first. This was mentioned, by the Savior, to illustrate the fact that the Jewish people were not making use of the opportunity which was then given them, and that their last state should be worse than the first. That which is said about the habit, or disposition, of unclean spirits, to walk through "dry" or "desert" places, seeking rest and finding none, is not clear by the Common Version. But the Greek word here translated by the word "dry" means also "uninhabited." The idea is, that in persons who improve their opportunities an evil spirit could not find any body to enter, and therefore could not find rest there. This should satisfy us.

Of what are we informed by that which the Savior said in this chapter concerning his mother and brethren? We are informed that his mother was still living, and that he had "brethren," in the ordinary sense of that word. This shows that Jesus was not the only child of his mother. Chapter 13:55, 56 are even plainer scriptures on this subject, as the "it sisters" of our Savior are there mentioned. We are informed also by that which the Savior said, in regard to his relatives, that those who obey his divine Father are worthy of being designated as his nearest relatives. This information, by itself considered, should be sufficient to cause all to whom it is made known, to obey the divine Father with their whole heart. The assurance that all Christians are the Savior's brethren, should cause all who learn thereof to become wholehearted Christians.

CHAPTER XIII

Of what are Bible readers informed in the chapter now before us? They are informed of the Savior's parable of the sower, and his answer to his disciples when they asked him why he spoke to the people in parables. Bible readers are next informed of the parable of the good seed and the tares, which is followed by the parable of the grain of mustard seed, and then is given the parable of the leaven which was hid in three measures of meal. The Savior's explanation of the parable of the good seed and the tares, is next given, followed by the parable of the hid treasure, the parable of the merchantman

seeking goodly pearls, and that one is followed by a record of the parable of the fish net. Next is set forth the parable of the householder, after which mention is made of the fact that when Jesus went into the country, where he had previously lived, the people were astonished because they knew him, also knew his mother, his brethren, and his sisters, and, yet, they did not know where he had received his great wisdom, and his power to do his mighty works. The chapter ends with mention of the fact that those who had previously known Jesus were offended in him, by reason of which he said, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." What may we say of this chapter as a whole? It chiefly consists of a record of parables, some of which are explained and applied. What is a parable? It is an illustration. The parables of our Savior have been defined as "earthly stories with heavenly meanings." This is a correct definition of most of them, but not of all. Some of them referred chiefly to the Jewish nation, in its earthly history. What may we learn by considering the parable of the sower, as found in this chapter? As explained by the Savior, it was intended to illustrate four classes of hearers of the Gospel, and the last class consists of three different grades of hearers. Are different classes of mankind like different kinds of soil by nature or by education? They are like different kinds of soil by both nature and education. At what period in life does their responsibility for wrong doing begin? At the period when they are permitted to learn their duty, but refuse, or after learning their duty refuse to perform it. What is it that tends most to cause mankind to resemble the beaten pathway, or wayside? Immorality, of all kinds, tends in that direction. What is most effective in making mankind shallow —like the stony ground? Novel reading, or reading of ungodly fiction. What tends most to cause them to be like the thorny ground? Ambition for wealth. Does the 12th verse of this chapter teach unfairness? No. It sets forth that which is constantly exemplified among mankind. Those who have humility, honesty, and diligence, are making a success in all departments of life, while all who lack those excellences are making failures. Thus it is that those who have such excellences shall receive, and they shall have abundance, while, all who have not such excellences will lose even that which they have. The parable of the talents, in chapter 25:14-30, illustrates this principle, and shows that it is fair and honorable among men, and is certainly fair in God's dealings with mankind.

What may we learn by considering the parable of the good seed and the tares? Its leading thought is that good and bad persons—Christians, and those who are not Christians should—in this world—"the field"—be permitted to live together, and that Christians should not try to destroy those who would reject Christ. What should we say to those who quote this scripture against church discipline, and teach, on the basis of this parable, that the good and the bad should be permitted to remain in the Church together? We should first say to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." Second, we should say that Christ declares "the field is the world," and this does not mean that "the field" is the Church. Third, we should say to them that Paul commands Christians, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (I Corinthians 5, 13.) Besides he says much more on the subject of church discipline.

But what should be our explanation of the 41st verse of this chapter? Revelation 11:15 informs us of the time of which this 41st verse makes mention. When that time will come, then the Lord will send his angels to "gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity." Will the world, generally, be under the influence of evil when the time will come for Christ to subdue the nations by his power? Yes, for "the nations" will then be "angry." See Revelation 11:18. Missionary societies will not "take the world for Christ," but through those societies with educational societies, and other human devices to teach religion, and thus pretend to help the Church, the devil is making great success in taking the Church for himself.

What is taught by the parable of the grain of mustard seed? It teaches concerning the great growth of the kingdom of heaven from a small beginning. But what shall we say to those who inform us that the mustard seed is not "the least" of the seeds? We should ask them if they know what the size of the mustard seed was when Christ was on earth. We should also ask them what they would think if Christ had said the wheat grain is the largest of all grains? They might say that a grain of Indian corn is larger than a grain of wheat, and this is true. But neither in Palestine, nor in any other part of the old world, was Indian corn known, and therefore the Savior might have said that wheat was the largest grain, and in so doing, perhaps, he would have spoken correctly, as far as men then knew, and, perhaps, as far as was then a fact anywhere on the face of the earth. The same may have been true in regard to the particular mustard

seed of which the Savior spoke when he uttered the parable which we have just considered. Moreover, the particular mustard seed of which he spoke was certainly "the least of all seeds," for the Savior said so, and this is sufficient, for all who believe in him, against all the carping critics who may now arise.

What was intended to be taught by the parable of the "leaven"? The doctrine of changing, or making like itself, is the idea that was intended to be set forth in that parable. The kingdom of heaven has assimilating power, for wherever it is established it tends to make that with which it comes in contact like unto itself. It has moralized, and even Christianized, thousands of communities.

What is set forth in the parable of the hid "treasure," as recorded in the 44th verse of this chapter? That parable teaches the preciousness of the kingdom of heaven, and the estimate which should be placed on it by mankind. The same is taught by the parable of "the pearl of great price," which is recorded in the 45th and 46th verses.

But what may we say of the parable of "the net that was cast into the sea"? That parable was intended to teach the same idea, in one respect, that is set forth in the parable of the "good seed," and the "tares," only in the fish net parable the men who cast the bad fish away are intended to represent the angels who will finally cast the bad away by separating the wicked from among the just. But neither the parable of the tares, nor the fish net parable, is intended to teach church discipline. The former sets forth the beginning, the continuance, and the end, of the Gospel Age, while the latter sets forth only the end of that age. In the former parable the good seed represents "the children of the kingdom," and the tares represent "the children of the wicked one," and it teaches that both classes shall be permitted to live together in this world till "the kingdoms of this world" shall "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." (Revelation 11:15.) Then the separation will take place. But the latter parable—that of the fish net—only represents the end of the Gospel Age, at which time the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of Christ, and then the separation will be made between the wicked and the just. When fish are caught in a net the assortment of the different kinds is begun without delay. Thus it will be when Christ will take possession of the kingdoms of this world. The assortment will begin at once, and the nations will be "angry." See Revelation 11:18. The time will have then come for the wick-

ed to cease reaping advantages from association with the just, but will be sent to their own place. No wonder that they will be "angry."

What was intended to be taught by the parable of the "householder"? It was intended to teach that every one who understands the word of God possesses much and varied information, even as a "householder" who understands his business, stores up much and various articles. This is constantly illustrated by the judicious housekeeper. She always has food, of several kinds, within reach, and is seldom, or never, embarrassed by company. The same is true of a well-informed preacher. He is seldom, or never' embarrassed, by a change in his audience, but can always select a subject suitable to the occasion.

What may we say of the mention made in the 55th and 56th verses, of the Savior's mother, and brethren, and sisters? We way say, that if the word "mother" should be taken in its ordinary meaning, then the words "brethren" and "sisters" should be so taken. Therefore the idea that Jesus did not have any natural brothers and sisters should be rejected by all who believe the record which Matthew gives of him.

Is the doctrine that a prophet is not without honor save in his own "country," and "house," still true? It is wherever personal pride prevails. Just in proportion as mankind are, personally, proud, they regard it as beneath their dignity to be taught by one whom they know, especially if he teaches unwelcome truth. But where family pride, or any other kind of local pride, except that which is personal, prevails, there is a disposition to learn from relatives because they are relatives, and from those of the same community because they are of that community.

CHAPTER XIV

Of what do we read in this chapter? We read of a certain ruler named Herod, of his wife, also of John the Baptist, and of his death, and the burial of his body. Next we read of Jesus feeding five thousand men, besides women and children, also of Jesus sending his disciples to the other side of the sea of Gennesaret, of his sending the multitude away, and of his departure into a mountain place to pray. Then we read of a storm on the sea, of Jesus walking to hip, disciples on the water, of what they thought when they saw him walking on the water, of what he said to them, also of Peter's faith and his doubt, and, finally, of Christ stilling the storm. The chapter ends with mention of Christ working miracles.

What is the meaning of the word "tetrarch," which we find in the first verse of this chapter? It means the ruler of a fourth part of a country, or province, but may refer to any ruler who is under superiors. A man named Herod was that kind of a ruler at the time mentioned in this chapter. And what may we say of the character of Herod? He was a bad and rash man, yet he regarded his rash oath, and, thereby, showed himself better, officially, than those who do not regard an oath seriously. God commanded the Jews to swear by his name. (Deuteronomy 6:13.) But they did much rash swearing, and thereby offended God. The Savior forbids all swearing. (Chapter 5:33-37.) In view of man's rashness we can understand the Savior's reason for his law in regard to swearing. Why did Jesus need to pray as it is stated in the 23rd verse he "went up into a mountain apart to pray"? Every good man, who has a good father, likes to talk to him. The same is true of every wise man who has a wise father. The divine Father is both good and wise, and Jesus is both a good and wise Son. For these reasons we can understand why Jesus prayed. But these are not the only reasons. Jesus came to this world to accomplish the most serious and important mission. That mission was two—fold. Jesus came to atone for mankind—came to satisfy the justice that condemned them—and he came to do so in the manner which would break down the enmity which sin had made in the human mind and heart. In order to accomplish this two-fold mission he needed his Father's assistance. Therefore he prayed often, and prayed earnestly. See Hebrews 5:7-9. What may we learn by considering the reason that Peter doubted while walking on the water at the Savior's command? He thought appearances were against him, and that is the reason for all other doubting in regard to divine power. Because appearances are against the idea that this world could have been created, and arranged, in six days, multitudes doubt that it was accomplished in that length of time. Besides, appearances are against every other miracle that is mentioned in the Bible. Therefore those who judge by appearances refuse to believe the accounts of miracles given in the Bible, and, as a result, deny all accounts of miracles. In so doing they show themselves infidels in regard to religion, especially the religion taught by Jesus Christ. They seem to think favorably of those religious which do not require self-denial, but they specially object to the doctrine of Christ, which declares that mankind shall deny themselves ungodliness and worldly lusts. Moreover, those who object

to that doctrine imagine that they thereby show themselves to be "independent thinkers," though, in fact, they show themselves independent of thinking-clear thinking, distinct thinking, and connected thinking. Ask them whence came this world, and the answer that they give suggests imbecility, or insanity. Those who constitute that class don't think enough to understand that the word "miracle" is a name for mystery, and that the same is true of the words "growth," "vegetation," "electricity," "nutrition," "combustion," "motion," and many others. Moreover that which is represented by each of those words is as great a mystery as that represented by the word "miracle. Nor is this all. The statement may be justly made that "unbelief in regard to the Bible," is only another expression for "ignorance in regard to the Bible." Those who have spoken and written against the Bible, without a single exception, show shameful ignorance of the Bible. And what should we say of men who declaim against a book that they have never studied? Are they worthy of confidence in any other direction, even if they do pretend to be possessed of much human learning? What is human learning worth if it does not require that those who possess it shall be modest, especially in regard to that which they have not studied?

CHAPTER XV

What are the leading subjects set forth in this chapter? Christ's interview with certain scribes and Pharisees is the subject first set forth, then his address to "the multitude," on the basis of what he had said to the "scribes and Pharisees" is here recorded, and is followed by his explanation to his disciples of what he had said to "the multitude." Next we read of Christ's interview with a woman of Canaan, who showed much faith. Finally, we read of Christ's healing those who came to him, and miraculously feeding a multitude of four thousand men, besides women and children. Who were the "scribes," and who were "the Pharisees," of whom we read in this chapter, and in many other parts of the Gospel records? The "scribes" were learned men of the Jews, whose official business was to take care of the Sacred Writings. They must have been faithful to their trust, for the Savior never censured them in regard to their work, nor ever intimated that they had ever corrupted the Sacred Text. The "Pharisees" were a sect of the Jews which believed the Old Testament, theoretically, but had added so many human notions, that they, in many instances, made the divine law, as given to the Jews, of no effect, by reason of those notions,

commonly called "traditions." The "scribes" generally united with the Pharisees in their criticisms of the Savior and his disciples. Thus it was in the instance recorded in the first of this chapter.

What may we learn by considering the 9th verse of this chapter? We may learn, and should learn, what "vain" worship was, and should consider that as it was when Christ was, personally, among mankind, so it is now. "To teach for doctrines the commandments of men" was "vain" worship then, and thus it is now. What effect should this have on those religious teachers who have ordinances, which are not divinely authorized? It should cause them to tremble with the fear that much, and, perhaps all, of their religion, is "vain" worship. What is designated "infant baptism," together with "confirmation," as an ordinance, "the mourners' bench," the "anxious seat," "annual communion," "quarterly communion," and "monthly communion"—all these, and many other doctrines, are strictly of human origin, and those who advocate them are guilty of "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." As a result they are guilty of that which the Savior declares is "vain worship."

And what may we say of the 13th verse of this chapter? It reveals, in an illustrative sentence, that every doctrine which God has not given shall be taken out of the minds and hearts of mankind. When will that result be accomplished? It has already been accomplished, in many instances, and will be, in many more instances, by the power of the truth. But all those who will resist the truth till the end of life, will then, or soon thereafter, be entirely undeceived. There is a degree of religious deception so deep, and terrible, that the sentence of final condemnation from the Savior will be necessary to banish it entirely. See Matthew 7:22, 23. But when that sentence will have been pronounced, then will be fully accomplished the saying of Christ, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."

And what may we say of the teaching found in the 14th verse of this chapter? It informs us that Christ declared that the "scribes and Pharisees" were "blind leaders of the blind," and should be let alone. This means that they could not be converted. Matthew 23rd chapter gives us further information concerning those two classes of Jews. They had reasoned themselves into a wrong condition of mind, and thought that they were serving God though not willing to be told of their faults, nor to be convinced of their errors. In other words they were "hypocrites," as the Savior declared in the 7th

verse of this chapter, also in Matthew 23rd chapter. Are there any such on the earth now? Yes, multitudes of them. And what will become of those who follow them? They will share in the threatened condemnation, as is indicated by the illustrative saying, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." What then should mankind all do, as soon as they come to the years of understanding? They should all study the Bible wholeheartedly in order to understand what it requires, so that they will not be misled by blind leaders.

What is the teaching of the 19th verse of the chapter now before us? That verse teaches exactly what it says. The word translated "heart" in that verse refers to the fleshly heart of mankind which receives the blood of the body, and drives it to the extremities of the body. The blood is the life of the flesh. See Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:14; Deuteronomy 12:23. This being true, the heart, because of its relation to the blood, is the center of the life of the body. Through the nervous system of the body the thinking which is done in the brain of mankind affects the heart, and, perhaps, never becomes , effective till the heart is quickened in its action. When it is thus quickened it has a reflex action on the thinking that is going on, and this thinking in turn intensifies the heart's action, till the will is influenced, so that a determination is settled, and then the proper preparation is made for a deed to be performed. This being true, we can understand why the Savior said, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies." The word here translated "thoughts" means " reasoning, ratiocination, thought, cogitation, purpose," and, therefore, it does not refer to that which is first in the mind on any subject, but it refers to reasoning, or reflecting. Thus the meaning of this word is in harmony with the conclusion stated in regard to the relation of the fleshly heart to the decisions of the human mind. It is questionable whether the human mind ever did form a decision to do anything except when the thinking that was done in order to form that decision was sufficient to move the fleshly heart to quicker action, and then in turn thinking was intensified by that quicker action, to move the will, so as to settle the purpose. Therefore, the Bible is right on this subject also, and those who deny that which it here says are wrong What may we learn by considering the case of the woman mentioned in this chapter? Her manner illustrates the earnestness of those who have a wholehearted faith, also the

humility of those who are "poor in spirit." She was persistent, and was not to be offended.

What is meant by the 26th verse? It means that Christ was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel—certain Jews—and that as it was not proper, on general principles, to take children's bread and give it to dogs, so it was not proper to take that which was intended for Jews, and give it to Gentiles. The Savior did not speak of the woman before him as a dog, but that which he said about "dogs" was only said by way of illustration. In order to learn what we don't know we need to look at it through something that we do know. This is the reason for illustrations or parables.

Is there any special revelation in the fact that Christ had compassion on the multitudes that had followed him, and that he wrought a miracle to feed them before he sent them away? Yes, the record of that fact shows that he had regard for their physical comfort, and indicates the divine Father's considerateness for the welfare of mankind. The Savior would not send the people away while they were hungry, lest they might "faint by the way." Therefore he wrought a miracle to feed them, and provided an abundance, so that the broken food that was left was sufficient to fill "seven baskets." This record of the Savior's interest in the welfare of poor people, should endear him to all mankind.

CHAPTER XVI

What is recorded for our learning in this chapter of the Sacred Text? We first find a record of the Savior's answer to certain Pharisees and Sadducees, who desired that he would show them "a sign from heaven"; next we find a record of the Savior's warning to his disciples against the doctrine of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees; then we read of Christ's interview with his disciples concerning what men said of him, and who he was, and what he would establish that would not be overcome. A record is then found of Christ's prophecy concerning his death, what Peter said about it, and what he said to Peter in response. The chapter ends with a statement of what would be necessary in self-denial in order to follow Christ, and what would be the result of making such self-denial, also of refusing to make it, followed by a statement concerning his coming "in the glory of his Father," and his "coming in his kingdom."

Did Christ ever work a miracle to gratify the curiosity of any one? No. Neither he, nor his Apostles, ever wrought a

miracle to gratify the curious. What is true of modern Spiritism, in this respect? Its pretensions are just the opposite of Christ's example. Spiritists advertise their pretended wonders, and endeavor to draw people to their meetings by advertising that which will gratify the curious. This is sufficient to indicate that modern Spiritism is Christless, and is an exhibition of "anti-Christ." What is meant by "the sign of the prophet Jonas"? Chapter 12:39, 40 informs us.

What is meant by "the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees"? Luke 12:1 informs us that it was "hypocrisy." They were religious pretenders, who were base hypocrites.

What were the chief differences between the Pharisees, and Sadducees? Acts 23:8 informs us that they differed concerning the existence of angels and spirits, also in regard to the resurrection. The Sadducees were more materialistic than is the modern materialist. They illustrated the perfection of materialism. They did not believe in either angel or spirit, and they denied the resurrection.

What is meant by the word "Bar," in the name Bar-Jona, as recorded in the 17th verse of this chapter? The word "Bar" is a Hebrew word, and means "son." "Bar-Jona" means "son of Jona." The fact that Christ spoke that word, in this instance, indicates not only that he spoke, in the Hebrew language, but that Matthew wrote his record of the Gospel in that language. If he had not written in that language the word "Bar" would not have occurred in his record.

What is the teaching of the 18th verse of this chapter? It teaches that Christ would, at some date then future, build his Church, and thus that he had not built it at that time. It teaches also that the gates of hades—the unseen world should not prevail against the Church which he would build. Though a part of the Church would go under the power of the unseen world, when Christians would die, yet they would not remain there, but would be brought forth in the resurrection of the just, when Christ will come again. Then another part of the Church will be alive, on the earth, when Christ will come again, and that part will never die. (See 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.) What, or to whom, did the Savior refer by the word "rock," as used in the 18th verse? Romans 9:33; 1 Corinthians 3:11 together indicate that Christ referred to himself, when he used that word. God was the "rock" of his ancient people, because he was their sure confidence. (See Psalm 18, 2, 31.) And Christ is the , rock , of his Church because he is its sure

confidence. What may we say of the idea that Peter's confession was the "rock" to which Christ referred? That idea is a human inference which touches the truth, but is not divine testimony, and I Peter 4:11 indicates that we should confine ourselves to the divine testimony just as it is recorded. That testimony does apply the word "rock," also the word "foundation," to Christ, but we fail to find wherein it applies that word to the confession of the Apostle Peter. And What may we say of the idea that Christ referred to Peter himself, when he used the word "rock," in this verse? We may say that it is too absurd to consider seriously. The Greek word translated "rock," and the word from which we have the word Peter, which means "stone," are different in form. Besides, Peter's disposition shows that he would, by himself, have made an uncertain foundation for the Church. See the 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter, also Galatians 2:11-14. Ephesians 2:20 shows that Peter did not have any pre-eminence over the other apostles. What should we say to those who contend that the Church of Christ was established in the days of John the Baptist? We should refer them to John 7:39, and show that the Holy Spirit was not given while John the Baptist was on earth, then refer them to John 16:23-27, and show them that the name of Christ was not given, in the lifetime of John the Baptist, as the name for disciples to use in approaching the Father in prayer, and finally, we should remind them that Christ's blood was not shed while John the Baptist lived. By so doing we may be able to show them that if a church had been established in John's day it would have been without the Holy Spirit, without the name of Christ through which to approach the Father, and without the blood of Christ. What is indicated by "the keys of the kingdom," as mentioned in the 19th verse? They indicate authority to open and shut—bind and loose—in making known the Gospel. Was that power given exclusively to Peter? No. (See John 20:19-23.) There we learn that the same power, or authority, was given to other apostles. When did Peter, and his brother Apostles, use the authority indicated by the expression "keys of the kingdom of heaven"? On the day of Pentecost all the Apostles were together in using them, though Peter was the chief speaker. See Acts 2nd chapter, especially the 38th verse. In Samaria Peter and John were together in using them, though Peter was again the chief speaker. See Acts 8:14-24, especially the 22nd verse. Then, as indicated by the epistolary writ-

ings, Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John, exercised the same authority, by the instructions which they gave to Christians, with reference to their final salvation. See especially 2 Peter 1:1-11; Revelation 22:14. Why did Jesus charge his disciples not to make him known, as "Jesus the Christ"? Luke 9:20-22 indicate that the time had not come for him to be declared "the Christ"—the Messiah. Chapter 17:9 of this record indicates the same. What may we learn by considering Peter's contradiction of Christ, and Christ's answer, as found in the 22nd and 23rd verses? We may learn that when Peter contradicted Christ he acted on the same principle that Satan did when he said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." God had said to Adam and Eve that they should "surely die," if they would eat of a certain tree, but Satan said they should "not surely die." Christ said that he should , be killed," but Peter said he should "not" be killed. Therefore Christ declared that Peter was Satan, for he had acted the part of Satan in contradicting a divine decree. What would Christ say to men who contradict him now , if he would speak to them directly? We have reason to believe that he would address them as he did Peter. For instance, Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but many religious persons teach thus: "He that believeth, and is" not "baptized shall be saved." What is taught by the statement found in the last of the 23rd verse? It teaches that Peter was considering the truth revealed to him from a human viewpoint, and not in the light of God's purpose.

And what may we say of the word "soul," in the 26th verse? It is used in the same sense that Peter used it in 1 Peter 1:9. This is indicated by the use of the word "life" in the sense of eternal life, in the 25th verse of this chapter. What is the difference between the coming of Christ "in the glory of his Father with his angels" and his "coming in his kingdom," as mentioned in the 27th and 28th verses of this chapter? The coming last mentioned was intended to be first, and was to be fulfilled in the lifetime of some who were with Christ when he spoke of it. Mark 9:1, with Acts 1 , 8, together indicate that when he would come in his kingdom then, by the Holy Spirit, the Apostles would receive power." This is evident from the word "power," as found in both of those verses. Therefore Christ came "in his kingdom," when his Church was established, as recorded in Acts 2nd chapter. But he will come "in the glory of his Father with his angels,"

when he will come to judge the world. (See chapter 25:31-46; Luke 9 , 26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.)

CHAPTER XVII

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of the transfiguration of Christ up in a certain high mountain, of what he said to his disciples in regard to it, and what he said to them with reference to John the Baptist being like Elias, or Elijah. Then we read of Jesus curing a lunatic, whom the disciples could not cure, and of the interview which Jesus had with his disciples in regard to such a case. Next we read that Jesus informed his disciples concerning his death, and the effect which such information had on them. The chapter is ended with an account of the Savior's interview with his disciples in regard to paying tribute. What is meant by the word "transfiguration"? It means "change of form or appearance, or change in both." The 2nd verse of this chapter informs us that Christ was changed in appearance so that "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." What was the transfiguration of Christ, and the appearance of Moses and Elias with him, specially intended to teach? We are not, directly, informed, and should not speculate concerning it. Yet the fact that Moses appeared on that occasion, after having been numbered with the dead for about fifteen hundred years, is certainly against the idea that man is not a spirit, as well as a body, and, therefore, this fact is positively against the doctrine called "Materialism." Moreover, the fact that a voice from heaven declared Christ to be God's "beloved Son" and gave command to "hear him" implies that Christ's disciples were, and are, under the authority of Christ, more than they are under Moses or Elias, and, therefore, implies that Christ's authority is above that of any Old Testament servant of God. What may we say of those preachers who discourse on the transfiguration of Christ, and, in so doing, declare that Moses and Elias appeared, on the mentioned occasion, to lay down their authority before Christ, and that he thenceforth should be the supreme teacher? What those preachers declare may be true, but their declarations, on this subject, are not revealed, and they should study 1 Peter 4:11. The authority of Moses was not ended till the law given through him was entirely fulfilled. What may we conclude from Peter's proposal to build "three tabernacles"? Luke 9:33 informs us that he made that proposal "not knowing what he said." And what should we

conclude as we consider the fact that a certain church has actually built "three tabernacles" on what is supposed to be the very place where Peter proposed to build them when he didn't know what he was saying? We should conclude that the church which did that doesn't know what it is doing, and neither do those churches which name their meetinghouses after the Apostles, or any other saints, after angels, or any other beings. "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." This sentence of our Savior describes all errorists, especially all who err in regard to religion. What is meant by the expression, "restore all things," as recorded in the last of the 11th verse of the chapter before us? It means that John the Baptist, who should come "in the spirit and power of Elias" (Luke 1:17), should restore all things that were spoken of with reference to him as a restorer, and not that he should restore everything that had been lost, or that needed restoring. Malachi 4:5, 6 and Luke 1:16, 17 indicate what John the Baptist should do as a restorer, and the history of his preaching shows that he accomplished that which was foretold concerning him. What may we learn by considering the case of the lunatic, as recorded in this chapter? In that case an evil spirit caused the affliction, and the disciples could not cast that spirit out because of their unbelief, just as Peter could not walk on the water when he doubted. See chapter 14:30, 31. Peter doubted "when he saw the wind boisterous," and the disciples lacked faith when they saw the one who was a lunatic by reason of a demon that possessed him. On the same principle mankind are still disposed to doubt when appearances are against them, and all such doubt is because of a lack of wholehearted faith. What was referred to by the 21st verse? The expression "cast him out," in the last of the 19th verse indicates that reference was made to the special kind of a demon that possessed the lunatic, going "out" of the person it possessed. Mark 9, 28, 29 is very clear on this subject. The disciples inquired concerning that kind of an evil spirit, "Why could not we cast him out?" Jesus answered, "This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting." In other words, in order for the disciples to have sufficient faith to cast out that kind of a demon, it was necessary for them to fast and pray. This shows that full official power, and right personal character, were divinely intended to belong together in the Apostles.

What is revealed for our learning in the care which the Savior showed by paying tribute? He is our exemplar, and shows us, by this part of his record, that we should be careful not to offend the government under which we live, by failing to do what that government has a right to require of us.

CHAPTER XVIII

What is made known to us in this chapter? That Christ's disciples inquired who should be, or at that time was, greatest "in the kingdom of heaven," is first made known, and then the answer which they received to their inquiry. That which Christ said concerning offenses against his disciples is also made known, in this chapter, and what his disciples should do when offended by one of the members of their own body. The parable of a shepherd and his sheep is next set forth, and applied. Christ's teaching in regard to personal offenses is then revealed, and this is followed by several phases of his doctrine in regard to forgiveness of offenses.

What disposition did Christ's disciples show when they inquired, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The account given in Mark 9:33, 34 indicates that they were moved by ambition, or desire for prominence. Is that disposition sometimes now shown by disciples in the Church? It is, and is always damaging to the peace of those who possess it, as well as to the peace of the congregation wherein it is shown. The Savior's rebuke of that disposition should serve to suppress it at all times. That rebuke declares that those who humble themselves as a little child shall be great in the kingdom of heaven. The same is now true in the Church. Those who are humble are highly esteemed.

What is the best evidence of humility in a disciple of Christ? The best evidence is being humble, and then keeping quiet about it. Some persons seem to fear that others will not observe their humility, and, therefore, they often talk about it. Those who are truly humble don't seem to fear that their humility will not be observed. On the same principle, those who are truly good are not afraid that their goodness will not be known.

Does the expression, "little ones," in the 6th verse, mean the same that the expression, "little children," means, in the 3rd verse of this chapter? No; see chapter 10:42, and Mark 9:41. Those scriptures taken together show that "little ones" means disciples of Christ. What may we say in regard to the 8th and 9th verses of this

chapter? They imply that those who would find it necessary to sever one of the members of their physical bodies in order to enter into life will not have that member restored in the resurrection. This does not mean that those who suffer the loss of a member, by an accident, will be deprived of that member in eternity, but that those who would find it necessary to sever a member in order that they might serve Christ will not have that severed member restored in the resurrection. But all that is said on this subject in the verses under consideration, and elsewhere in the Gospel records, may have been intended simply to convey the general idea that mankind should determine to do the Lord's will regardless of what it may cost them.

What is meant by the last part of the 10th verse? Hebrews 1:14 indicates the meaning of it. Angels are ministering spirits, sent to minister in behalf of those who shall be heirs of salvation. In other words, God takes care of his people by means of his angels, and only suffers such evils to befall them as may be necessary to try them, and to teach them lessons which it is necessary for them to learn, in order to become humble, and thus be acceptable to God.

What is taught by the 11th verse of this chapter? It teaches that the doctrine of individual predestination to life and death is not correct, for those who were predestinated to everlasting life, according to that doctrine, were never "lost." Therefore Christ did not come to save them. Yet if there were any predestinated to be "lost", and Christ came to save them, then he came to work in opposition to a decree of the divine Father. But Christ said that he came to do the Father's will. See John 5:30; 6:38. Therefore the 11th verse of this chapter is in direct opposition to the doctrine of individual predestination to eternal life, on the one hand, and to everlasting destruction, on the other.

What is taught in the parable of the lost sheep, as set forth in this chapter? The divine Father's interest in all those who believe in him is taught in that parable. We may not be of much account, in the estimation of our fellow mortals, but we are of great value before God. This assurance should comfort the weakest believer in Christ. And what is taught in the instructions here given in regard to personal trespass? The leading thought is that character is not altogether determined by doing wrong, but by persisting in it. If one Christian commits a wrong against another, the wrong doer is not to be at once rejected, or impeached, but is to be given three opportunities to learn what his wrong

is, and to correct it, or make such other amends as may be possible, before the Savior orders a rejection of the wrong doer as a bad character. All mankind are liable to make mistakes, and whether a mistake has been made intentionally, or not, can only be determined by giving the one who makes it an opportunity to correct it. Thus it is in the business world, also in social life, and in the family. A mistake should not be charged to a wrong motive till an opportunity has been given to correct it.

But suppose that, in a case of alleged personal trespass, there isn't any evidence except that of the persons directly involved in it, and one affirms, while the other denies, what can brethren, or the church, do in such a case? They can only bring to bear those scriptures, and other arguments, which will cause both the accused and the accusers to be honest with themselves, with each other, and with the Lord. If such arguments fail, they can not act, except to recommend that both parties shall do right and wait for developments, in God's good providence, to enable them to understand who is certainly right, and thus to decide who is certainly wrong.

If one Christian learns that another feels offended at him should he wait till the supposed offender comes to tell him of his fault? No; but he should obey what is enjoined in chapter 5:23, 24. The offended one may delay doing his duty, and, therefore, the offender, or the supposed offender, should go and inquire with reference to the supposed offense. By this method of procedure, attended to in the right spirit, 611 real, and supposed, offenses, can, generally, be settled.

In what spirit should Christians tell each other of their faults, or trespasses? In the spirit of meekness, as Paul commands in Galatians 6:1. Is not character determined, in any instance, by an actual offense, regardless of persisting in it? Yes, it is in case of crime. The Jews who committed blasphemy showed their character by that offense. The same is true of those who commit murder, or any other crime. But the blasphemy committed by the Jews, who charged the Savior with working certain miracles by the power of the devil, was only the outward manifestation of that which was within them, and had long been cherished. The same is true of crime in general. Evil thoughts and feelings, which are necessary to prepare the mind and heart for crime, are persisted in until the proper preparation is made. Then the crime that is committed is only the result of that preparation. The rule is this: Crime must be committed, in thoughts and emotions, and persisted in, before it is committed in fact. There-

fore it is true, even in regard to crime, that character is determined only by persisting in wrong, for wrong thoughts and emotions must, generally, be persisted in before they will result in wrong deeds.

What is taught by the 18th verse? The connection in which it is set forth shows that it means this: All settlements made, according to the divine teaching, here on earth, will be acknowledged and ratified in heaven.

And what is meant by the 19th and 20th verses? The 19th verse assures us if two Christians call on God in prayer in regard to the same thing, then they will receive what they pray for. But this should be considered in the light of 1 John 5:14, which informs us that the divine will must be consulted in our prayers. What should we answer those who say that the 19th verse of this chapter referred exclusively to the Apostles. We should inform them that they may as well say that the 20th verse refers exclusively to the Apostles, also that all set forth in this chapter about settling personal difficulties, refers exclusively to those who were Apostles. But the 20th verse of this chapter, evidently, was intended to encourage those who were disciples, and who would become disciples, to meet in the name of Christ. In Exodus 20:24 Jehovah said to ancient Israel, "In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee and bless thee," and to Christians the Savior says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. , Does this mean that Christ will be personally in the midst of those who would gather in his name? No; but when Christians meet in the name of Christ they certainly have the presence of his name in their midst, and he knows where his name is, and where it is revered. Christ's name is inseparably connected with him, and, by reason of this, he is in the midst of those who meet in his name. What is taught by the 21st and 22nd verses? They teach that Christians are not to limit themselves in regard to extending forgiveness to those who offend them. Is forgiveness to be extended without repentance on the part of the offender? The remainder of this chapter indicates that repentance is necessary. See also Luke 17:4. But may not Christians pass over some offenses of their brethren, also of others besides their brethren, and treat them well without repentance for such offenses? Yes, and they should do so whenever it is possible. Christians ought not to be easily offended. Certainly we should not watch for something to feel offended over. Though there is a difference in temperaments, and

some persons are, naturally, very sensitive, yet, in proportion as mankind love the Gospel, they will not suffer themselves to become offended. In Psalm 119:165 we find this: "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." The same is true now. In proportion as we love the Gospel we will not suffer ourselves to become so offended as to turn from the Gospel. The sick child is, generally, more easily offended than children that are well, and the bad tempered child is always more sensitive than one that is good tempered. The same is true in the Church, and Christians should not act the part of sick children, nor of bad tempered children. On the contrary, we should all endeavor to be strong, as is required in Ephesians 6:10-18, and having become strong we should obey Romans 15:1. But when all Christians do their best in their relations to each other, some offenses will be committed against persons who are, by nature, very sensitive. Such persons should never be chosen for overseers nor for deacons, nor for any other position of responsibility in the Church. If those who are sensitive can be kept in the Church, without giving them anything special to do, a good end will be accomplished. But if responsibilities, of any kind, are imposed on them they are liable to become offended, and leave the Church. A congregation which has persons in it who are very sensitive, by nature, will need to exercise much patience, and forbearance, toward them, and, in ordinary instances, their little poutings should not be noticed. If sensitive children hurt themselves, and you don't notice their hurt, they will soon get over it, but if you notice it they imagine that their hurt is very serious. The same is often true of sensitive church members. How can persons who are very sensitive overcome that unfortunate temperament? They should make Psalm 119:165 their watchword, secret grip, and countersign. By so doing they will impress their minds that, in proportion as they love the word of God, they will overcome their sensitiveness. They will consider, when their feelings are wounded, that God still lives, the Bible is still true, the earth still revolves, and time still continues. Then, in course of time, they will learn to inquire, when offended, how the matter, or occasion of offense, will appear when they get beyond it, and it will all have passed way. Then their wounded feelings will be soothed, their ruffled temper will subside, and quiet will be restored. Likewise, the charity that "thinketh no evil"—that will not imagine that an offense was intended by the offender—will be a safeguard against cherishing offended feelings. Finally, if sensitive Christians will learn to pray for those who

have offended them , their offended condition will subside, and they will, in course of time, overcome their sensitiveness. What should we learn by considering the last part of this chapter? We should learn to be ready always to extend forgiveness when it is asked for by those who have offended us. If we do not forgive them when they request us to do so, will our heavenly Father charge against us our former offenses? The last verse indicates that he will. But if our sins are blotted out, how can they be again charged against us? If we become unforgiving in our disposition toward our brethren, then we show ourselves untrue to our obedience to the Gospel , in its first requirements, and God will be justified in taking away the blot by which our sins were canceled. But, let this be as it may, we should be careful to cherish a forgiving disposition toward our brethren. How should we treat those who are not numbered with our brethren if they offend us, or inflict injury on us? Matthew 5:25, 26 indicate that we should deal with offenders, who are not Christians, in the spirit of compromise so as to avoid difficulty with them. But if they thrust difficulty on us, and especially if they disgrace us, then we should exercise our legal rights as Paul did. See Acts 16:37; 25 , 10, 11. What may we say in regard to those who teach that Christians should not exercise their legal rights, as citizens of a human government, in opposition to those who inflict on them personal injury? We may say that the example of Paul in regard to exercising legal rights against persecutors informs us what we may do, and what we should do, in defending ourselves against our ungodly enemies who persecute us.

CHAPTER XIX

Of what subjects are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed of Christ healing multitudes then of his teaching concerning marriage and divorce, next' of the little children that were brought to him, and of that which he and his disciples said in regard to them. We are also informed with reference to a certain young man who was rich, and what the Savior said concerning him and other rich men. In the last part of this chapter is an account of an interview between the Savior and the Apostle Peter in regard to forsaking earthly possessions and relations, in order to follow Christ, and the reward for so doing. What should we learn by considering that which the Savior declares in this chapter concerning marriage and divorce? We should learn that the Savior endorsed marriage as God

first ordained it, and not as it had been modified by the Jewish law. We should also learn that Christ intended to teach that a divorce granted, by the civil law, for any reason, except unchasteness, is not lawful, in heaven's sight, in course of the Gospel Age. Did the Apostles, or any other inspired preachers of the Gospel, ever refuse to baptize a man, or a woman, because of improper marriage relations? No. At least the divine record does not inform us that they did. What effect should this have on uninspired preachers? It should prevent them from refusing to baptize any man, or woman, because of improper marriage relations. We should not be wise above what is written by inspired ones. Did the primitive churches refuse to receive those who came to them, as obedient believers, if they had not previously regarded the Savior's teaching concerning marriage? No. The divine record is silent on the subject. What effect should this have on all churches of Christ? It should cause them to be silent on that subject because they cannot go beyond what is written without losing their relation to God and Christ. See 2 John 9th verse.

What should we say to those who speak of men and women, that are true to each other in their marriage relation, as "living in adultery," because their marriage was improper when they entered into it? We should say that those who use the expression—"living in adultery"—as a standard of measuring, do not "speak as the oracles of God," and do not abide "in the doctrine of Christ." On the contrary, they formulate an expression, and use it as a standard by which to measure, even as those do who use the expression, "getting religion," as a standard of measuring.

What expression should Christians use in speaking of the marriage of those who are not free to marry because of previous relations? We should use the expression "committeth adultery," and we should use it just as the Savior did, in the 9th verse of this chapter, and not any farther. By so doing we shall avoid the expression "living in adultery," and the idea it sets forth. Men and women commit adultery when they enter into the marriage relation improperly, but having entered that relation they thereby break any previous marriage relation which may still exist, and are bound together as husband and wife, and are divinely required so to regard each other. See I Corinthians 6:16.

What should we say to those who declare that any relation entered into by a sinful act is always a wrong relation? We should say, "Ye do err not knowing the scriptures nor the

power of God." All who thus declare certainly do not consider the wrong act of which ancient Jacob was guilty when he secured the blessing of his older brother (Genesis 27th chapter), nor the wrong act of Joshua and others with reference to the Gibeonites (Joshua 9th chapter) , nor the wrong act of David when he took to himself the wife of Uriah the Hittite. See 2 Samuel 11th and 12th chapters. Besides, those who thus declare seem to think that if a Christian swears—makes a solemn oath—contrary to the Savior's teaching, and thereby sins, he ought not to do what his oath requires, simply because he sinned in making it. What is the difference between swearing and committing adultery? The Savior condemns both with equal severity in his sermon on the mount? Suppose, then, that a Christian enters a business relation by a sinful act called "an oath," is he not bound in that relation by that oath? Certainly. On the same principle, if he enters the marriage relation by a sinful act called "adultery," is he not bound in that relation by that act? Certainly. Then what becomes of the declaration that a sinful act can never be the basis of a right relation? It is unscriptural in regard to an oath, also in regard to adultery, as both of those acts are fatal in that they break certain former relations, and bind to certain new relations.

Why are certain disciples slow to learn the truth in regard to divorce? They have, generally, examined the divine teaching concerning marriage without considering 1 Corinthians 6, 16, and, as a result, they don't understand that the marriage relation, in heaven's sight, is determined by a fleshly act, and is broken by a fleshly act. Affection, and conformity to civil law, are all right in connection with marriage, but they do not constitute marriage in heaven's sight. Hatred, and conformity to civil law, may be regarded necessary in order to legal divorce, but they do not constitute divorce in heaven's sight. But a certain fleshly act with one person is marriage, and the marriage thus formed can only be broken by a similar fleshly act with another person, or by the death of either husband or wife. Does this view of marriage present a low view of that relationship? No; but it presents an exalted view of the sacredness of a chaste man, and of a chaste woman, also an exalted view of the sacredness of marriage. It is so sacred that one unlawful fleshly act will break it forever. Murder destroys life forever, and fornication, by a married person, destroys that one's former marriage relation forever. At the same time fornication by such a person binds that one in the sacredness of the marriage relation with the one, in connection with whom,

the act of fornication is committed. This conclusion is unavoidable when the 9th verse of this chapter and I Corinthians 6:16 are both fully considered in their bearings and relations. These scriptures forbid the conclusion that a man can have a lawful wife, in heaven's sight, and yet play fast and loose with her, or that a woman can have a lawful husband, in heaven's sight, and yet play fast and loose with him. The marriage relation is so sacred, and so binding, that it cannot be broken except by death, or unchasteness, and when broken it is broken forever. If persons who have broken that relation unite again as husband and wife it is a new relation, and under the Jewish law such a new relation was an abomination before the Lord." See Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Under the Gospel it would be the same, except on the principle of forgiveness mentioned in Matthew 12:31, and Acts 13:39. In the Gospel Age only one sin is declared to be unpardonable.

What should we say if called on to define a "bastard"? We should say that the word "bastard" is only a legal term, and that every child born into this world has, in heaven's sight, a natural father and a natural mother, and, according to nature, is a legitimate child.

What is meant by the 12th verse of this chapter? It means Let him, to whom it applies, receive this saying about marriage, but it does not apply to all, because not all men are marriageable, or are fit to enter the marriage relation.

What may we learn by considering the 13th and 14th verses of this chapter? We may learn, especially by considering Mark 10:16, that Jesus desired to receive little children, and to bless them, when he was on earth. This indicates his disposition toward them in the fulness of the Gospel Age, and suggests that Christians should do all they can to instruct little children as well as all others, concerning Jesus.

What is taught by the 17th verse of this chapter? The teaching here is that God is the only one who is "good," in an unmodified sense. Even Jesus is a created being (Revelation 3:14), and, thus, derives his goodness from God.

What may we learn by considering Christ's interview with the rich young man, of whom we read in this chapter? We may learn that the Jewish law was in force, at the time of that interview, as is indicated by the fact that Christ referred the young man, who inquired of him, to the Jewish law. We may learn also that the mentioned young man was self-deceived, for he thought he was willing to obey the Savior, in all things, but found he was not. Finally, we may learn that a rich man cannot easily enter the kingdom of heaven,

because he is not willing to give up his riches. Does Christ now require all rich men to do as he commanded in the 21st verse of this chapter? No; but he requires them to love him more than they love their riches, or even their own lives, in order to become Christians. This was true in a special sense when Christians were persecuted unto death. Then he requires them, as Christians, to give as the Lord has prospered them. See chapter 10:37; Luke 14:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2; 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

What is taught by the 24th verse? In the absence of all other indications we must conclude that it teaches what it says, and, therefore, means that a camel, with his hump on his back, could easier go through the eye of a common needle, than a rich man—one whose heart is set on his riches—could enter the kingdom of heaven. This strong illustration the Savior used in order to set forth that it is impossible for a rich man, who trusts in his riches, to enter the kingdom of heaven. See Mark 10:24. The occasion which brought forth that illustration was that a certain rich man had turned away from the Savior, in order to cling to his riches, and, therefore, he was the kind of a rich man who could not enter the kingdom of heaven, because he trusted in his riches. What is taught by the 26th verse? It intimates that with God it is possible for a rich man to be deprived of his riches, and become poor, or to become poor in spirit, and, as a result, be sufficiently humble to enter the kingdom of heaven.

And what may we learn by the record here given of Peter's question, and the Savior's answer, in regard to forsaking all and following him? We may learn, first, what the Apostles should have as a reward for following Christ, and, second, what all others should receive in this world, and what they shall receive in the world to come, for self-denials for his "name's sake." What is indicated by the 28th verse? It indicates that in the Gospel Age the Apostles would sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But is this true? Yes, in the same sense that Jeremiah was set "over the nations and over the kingdoms." See Jeremiah 1:10. The prophet Jeremiah was, by the words which Jehovah gave him to speak, set "over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant," because those results were intended to be accomplished when the words he gave to that prophet would be fulfilled. In that same sense the Apostles are now sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and in that sense all Christians "shall judge the

world," and "shall judge angels." See I Corinthians 6:2, 3; also Luke 11:31, 32. Christians shall judge the world and judge angels, by contrast—by showing what can be done in obeying divine requirements, and, thereby, conforming to the divine will.

Is the 29th verse, in any respect, applicable to Christians under the fulness of the Gospel Age? Yes; and it will continue to be fulfilled even till the close of time, at least, in some degree. The Apostles became members of a brotherhood which gave them much more of this world than they had forsaken for Christ's sake, and the same is true of all preachers of Christ, in the Gospel Age, who are faithful to the Gospel. The brotherhood with which self-denials, for the Gospel's sake, connect preachers of Christ, is worth more to them, when they need help, than all that the Gospel requires them to forsake.

What is meant by the last verse of this chapter? The answer to this question is given in the first part of the next chapter, and can only be explained by considering it. In the parable of the "householder," as set forth in that chapter, the declaration found in the last verse of this chapter is made plain.

CHAPTER XX

What are the subjects set forth in the chapter now before us? The kingdom of heaven is illustrated, in a certain particular, by a parable, and then a record is given of certain information which the Savior gave, to his twelve disciples, in regard to that which would occur concerning himself at Jerusalem. Next we read that which the mother of two of Christ's disciples requested him to grant them, and of his answer to her, also of the effect which that mother's request had on the other disciples, and, finally, we read of Christ's speech with reference to greatness in the kingdom of heaven. The chapter ends with a record of two blind men requesting the Savior to have mercy on them, and of the fact that he heeded their request, and gave them their sight, also of the fact that they then followed him.

What may Bible readers learn by considering the parable recorded in the first part of this chapter? That parable was spoken in answer to the Apostle Peter's question as recorded in the 27th verse of the preceding chapter. Peter inquired what he, and his brother Apostles, should have as a reward for what they had forsaken in following the Savior. In answer to his inquiry the Savior told him what the official position of the Apostles should be during the Gospel Age, likewise

what all others who had forsaken earthly possessions or relations, or both, for his sake, should receive. Then he declared, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last first." What he meant by that declaration he explained by the parable now under consideration. In that parable we find that the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who, at five different times, hired laborers for his vineyard, and that he made a special contract with the first class of laborers that he hired, but that all the others were satisfied with the assurance that he would "give" them what would be "right." In that parable we further learn that the man who hired the mentioned laborers ordered that all those who had agreed to serve him on the assurance that he would "give" them what would be "right" should be rewarded first, or before the others, and that each should be given as much as he had agreed to give those with whom he had made a special contract. We learn next that the special contract laborers complained because those who had entered the vineyard last had received as much as those who had entered it first. The answer that was made to the complainers is next recorded, and then we read, "So the last shall be first, and the first last". In other words, the Savior taught Peter that the kingdom of heaven should not be served by special contract, and that those who make such contract will not be satisfied. Even if the full sum which their contract calls for is paid to them they will not be satisfied. On the other hand, he taught that those who will serve in the kingdom of heaven, on the general assurance that they shall receive what is "right," will be first rewarded, and will be satisfied. This thought is also set forth: As a man, mentioned in this parable, who hired laborers, was careful to reward those first who had trusted him without a special contract, and then paid the special contract laborers last, so, in the kingdom of heaven, those laborers will be rewarded most liberally and promptly, who serve on a general assurance, while those who insist on a contract will be paid least, and last.

May we now observe the teaching of this parable in the churches of Christ? Preachers damage themselves in the estimation of true disciples in proportion as they are contentious for a special contract, and they exalt themselves among their brethren in proportion as they do their whole duty without regard to earthly reward. But can preachers do their whole duty toward a church if they do not teach what the scriptures say in regard to supporting preachers? No. On the contrary, all preachers of Christ should study 1 Corinthians 9:14, and other scriptures which bear on the same subject, so that they

can teach churches on that subject. Yet they should not name the sum which they must have, as remuneration, for their preaching. The kingdom of heaven should not be served by special contract. Those preachers who insist on having such contracts will not be well esteemed, and will not be satisfied, when they will receive their pay.

What is taught by the saying, "Many are called, but few are chosen?" Chapter 22:14 indicates its bearing, for it is there used with reference to the man who was called to a marriage feast, but who did not put on the wedding garment. On the same principle, many who are called by the Gospel will not be chosen to enter into everlasting life, because they will not conform to all that the Gospel requires. Over six hundred thousand Israelites, able to act the part of soldiers, were called out of Egypt, but, after a trial of forty years, only two of that number were permitted to enter the land of promise.

What are the leading ideas set forth in the record given in this chapter concerning the request which was made by the mother of James and John? The first idea is that the mother of those men was like many other mothers,—she desired that her sons should occupy prominent positions. In Mark 10:35-37 we learn that James and John expressed that desire. The 20th verse of this chapter informs us that they accompanied their mother when she approached the Savior in their behalf. This shows that they approved what she requested, and in Mark's record that which she requested is charged to them. Thus the two records are in harmony for that which those men did through their mother, or sanctioned in their mother, they were justly charged with doing themselves.

But what may we learn by considering the Savior's answer to James and John, and to their mother? It reveals that the kingdom of heaven should not be served for the sake of prominence. It further reveals that the chief prominence which the kingdom of heaven offers is in reward for serving the best interests of others, and not in being their ruler. This shows that prominence among Christ's followers is on a very different principle from the prominence which exists among the people of the world. Among the Gentile nations prominence means rulership, but among Christ's followers prominence means servitude. What effect should this teaching have on preachers, elders, deacons, and all other members of the Church of Christ? It should cause them to suppress every vestige of conceit, and every disposition to domineer over their brethren. Then, on the contrary, it should cause all to consider Christ's example, as mentioned in the 28th verse of this chapter, and Paul's teaching as set

forth in Galatians 5:13. By so doing we shall become real imitators of Christ, who is our perfect exemplar.

is there anything special for us to learn in the record given of the blind men mentioned in the last of this chapter? Yes. Those blind men were so anxious to have their sight restored, that they called on the Savior, and would not cease calling on him even when rebuked by his disciples. Their example indicates, in some degree, the intense earnestness which all mankind should have in regard to securing relief from their spiritual blindness. We should not be sensitive, and should not be prevented from calling on the Lord for light, by reading and studying his Holy Word, even if we should be rebuked for so doing by ignorant persons.

CHAPTER XXI

Of what do we read in this chapter? We first read of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem according to prophecy, also that he cleansed the temple in Jerusalem, and of what he said in connection with that event. Then we read that Christ cursed the barren fig tree, so that it withered, and that he spoke of what his disciples might do by faith. Next we read of an interview between Christ, and certain "chief priests" with "elders of the people," concerning his authority, which was followed by a parable of a father, and his two sons, whom the father commanded to work in his vineyard. The chapter ends with a record of another parable, of its application to the Jews, and of its effect.

What was the prophetic sign of Christ entering Jerusalem? The prophecy was that he should enter the city riding two beasts of burden at the same time. Do the facts, as recorded in this chapter, indicate that Jesus literally fulfilled this prophecy concerning himself? They do. The 7th verse informs us that the disciples whom Jesus sent to bring to him an ass and her colt, did as they were commanded, "and put on them their clothes, and set him thereon." This testimony informs us, beyond reasonable controversy, that those disciples set Jesus on both animals. In so doing, we may suppose, they must have set him across the backs of the two donkeys. But, regardless of our suppositions, the testimony informs us that the disciples who brought the two donkeys to Jesus "Put on them their clothes, and set him thereon."

What should we say to those who take the record given in Mark 11:1-8, also that given in Luke 19:28-35, and, on the basis of those records, insist that Jesus entered Jerusalem riding only the colt? We should inform them that the prophecy in Zechariah 9, 9 declares that Zion's king should

come "riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass," and that Matthew 21:5 quotes that prophecy and declares its fulfillment. Then we should inform them that the plural embraces the singular, in this instance, even as it does in regard to the two men spoken of in chapter 8:28. Mark 5:2 and Luke 8:27 only mention one man in writing of the same occasion. This is an instance which shows Matthew's record to be more nearly complete than that of Mark, or Luke, and indicates that the accounts given by those writers should not be arrayed against the account furnished by Matthew. If two men, "in the country of the Gergesenes" met the Savior, then one man certainly met him, for the greater number, two, includes the lesser number,—one. Thus it was, and is, in regard to the records of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in regard to the number of beasts of burden that the Savior rode into Jerusalem. Matthew's record covers all that Mark and Luke declare, and more than they declare, in this instance, even as in others.

Finally, the remark should be made, in regard to Christ's manner of entrance into Jerusalem, that for him to have entered riding only one beast of burden would not have been a sign by which he could have been recognized. For a man to ride into Jerusalem on an ass was a common occurrence every day, except on the sabbath, and, therefore, if Christ had entered in the common manner of riding there would not have been any sign in his entering by which he could have been recognized. But for him to have entered Jerusalem "riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass"—this was a sign by which he could have been recognized by those who had read Zechariah 9:9 with care.

What may we learn by considering the record given in this chapter concerning what the Savior did in cleansing the temple? We may learn that he revered the house of God, and it implies that Christians should keep themselves—the Church of God—from all evil. The temple was a type of the Church, even as the tabernacle was. (See Judges 18:31; Nehemiah 6:10.) Then in I Timothy 3:15, we learn that "the Church," as consisting of Christians, is designated "the house of God."

What should we say to those who speak of the fact that Christ cleansed the temple, as an argument against Christians having fairs and festivals in their meeting-houses? All those who thus use this fact certainly misapply it. The sanctity of the holy place of the tabernacle, and of the temple, was intended to foreshadow the sanctity of the Church, as it should

consist of Christians. Therefore that which Christ did when he cleansed the temple indicates what all Christians should do with reference to themselves. (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.)

What may we say in regard to the fact that Jesus cursed the barren fig tree, when we consider Mark 11:13 with reference to that event? The record does not explain. A later version of Mark 11:13 says, "for it was not the season for figs." We are, therefore, left to conclude that in view of Christ's greatness that particular fig tree should have borne figs out of "season" in order to feed him. Besides, the power of Christ to curse a tree so that it would soon wither away, is shown by that which is here recorded, and this indicates his power to curse all nature.

And what may we say of the 22nd verse of this chapter? It should be considered in the light of 1 John 5:14.

Is there any special lesson to be learned by the record here given of Christ's interview with certain priests and elders in regard to his authority? Yes, Christ showed his superiority to those priests and elders, also showed that he was not disposed to gratify dishonest men. He knew that they could have answered their own question if they had used their common sense, and common honesty. Therefore, instead of answering their question he confused them by asking them another. Christians are often justified in meeting curious questioners on the same principle. To inquire of a curious questioners on the same principle. To inquire of a curious questioner, "Who are you, and what are you" will often confuse him, and will save much time in answering his idle inquiries.

What is the lesson taught in the parable of the man who told his two sons to work in his vineyard? That repentance is a change of mind, followed by a corresponding change of conduct, is thereby taught, likewise the emptiness of one, who is under authority, making a promise to obey without regarding it when the time comes for rendering obedience. Then the application of the behavior of the sons mentioned in this parable shows that the Savior intended to illustrate the obedience of "the publicans and the harlots," who submitted to the teaching of John the Baptist while "the chief priests and the elders of the people" refused John's teaching.

And what may we learn by considering the parable of the "householder," and his "vineyard"? We may learn that it sets forth the injustice of the Jewish people, in their dealings with Jehovah, also that his purpose was to overthrow them, take the kingdom from them, and establish it among the Gentiles.

What is taught by the 44th verse of this chapter? The meaning of the word "broken," is indicated by Isaiah 8:15, in which was a prophecy that the Jewish people should, as a nation, be "broken." The same idea is set forth by the word "broken," in the verse before us. Christ is the "stone," mentioned in this verse, as is indicated by the word "stone" in the 42nd verse. The Jewish people, as a nation, stumbled and fell on, or over, that "stone," and, as a result, they were "broken," as a nation. Not only so, but they remain broken, and will remain thus till the time will come for them to be gathered together. (See Luke 21:24.)

But what is taught by the last part of the 44th verse of this chapter? Daniel 2:34, 35 clearly indicate that when the time will come for the Church of Christ to be made supreme, then judgment will be inflicted on all rebellious people, and nations. (Revelation 11:15-18.) Then the boasted power of all rebellious ones will be "like the chaff of the summer threshing floor," and like unto "powder." Then the divine power will be manifested, and will overthrow all other powers.

CHAPTER XXII

Of what does this chapter, of the divine record, inform Bible readers? It informs them that Jesus spoke a parable concerning a certain king who made a marriage feast for his son, and invited many, also of an interview between the Savior and the Pharisees who endeavored to "entangle him in his talk." Next we are informed of an interview which he had with certain Sadducees, and then of another interview which he had with the Pharisees, after which we are informed that his enemies ceased to ask him questions.

What is the bearing of the parable recorded in the first part of this chapter? It illustrates God's treatment of the Jews in giving them the first opportunity to become partakers of the spiritual provisions for mankind which are offered in the Gospel. It illustrates also the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews, and the punishment inflicted on them by the destruction of Jerusalem. Then, by the second company of guests, invited to the marriage feast, is illustrated the invitation of the Gentiles to become partakers of the benefits of the Gospel. By the man who did not put on the "wedding garment," which was provided for guests by the maker of the feast, is illustrated those Gentiles who presume to become partakers of Gospel promises without obedience to the requirements of the Gospel. They say, "Baptism is a non-es-

sential to salvation," or, "a drop of water is as good as an ocean," or, "We are saved by Christ, and not by ordinances."

What does the word , "speechless," mean, as found in the 12th verse of this chapter? The Greek word here translated "speechless" means first of all "to muzzle," and then it means "to put to silence," and, finally, "to be hushed." These shades of meaning show that the man who is spoken of in the text, now under consideration, was not a dumb man, but that he simply had not a word of reply which he could offer when inquired of by the master of the feast why he had not put on a wedding garment. Thus will it be with all who ignore water baptism, or any other requirement of the Savior. They venture to make some sort of reply to their fellow mortals who may question them, in regard to their conduct, but when they will appear before the great Judge they will all be "speechless." Then the 14th verse of this chapter will be finally fulfilled. Why was it "wickedness" for certain Pharisees to ask Jesus whether it was lawful to give tribute to the Roman government? Because if he had said, "No," they would have accused him before the civil authorities. This is evident by that which is recorded in Luke 23:2. On the other hand, if he had said, "Yes," they would have accused him before the Jews who despised to pay tribute. But what may we say of the answer that the Savior gave to those Pharisees? It was the perfection of wisdom, in view of the circumstances.

What may we learn by considering the Savior's response to certain Sadducees, who questioned him in regard to the resurrection? That response set forth a truth of universal application, namely, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." Mankind are right in science, in politics, in business principles, in domestic life, in morals, and in religion, in proportion as they are in harmony with the Bible; and they are wrong, in all these respects, in proportion as they differ from the Bible. But the resurrection is the subject set forth in the mentioned interview. That which the Savior therein stated on that subject shows that family relations, as based on flesh and blood, will not exist beyond this life, likewise that the doctrine of materialism is false. The 32nd verse of this, chapter and Luke 20:38, taken together, show that Abraham' Isaac, and Jacob, and "all" others, who are numbered with the dead, "live unto" God. The word, "dead," is here used in the ordinary sense.

Therefore, the fact that Jehovah is declared to be "the God" "of the living" and not of "the dead," shows that the doctrine of materialism is a falsehood. The Savior did not impeach the motives of the Sadducees, and we should not impeach the motives of the materialists now living, yet we may safely say to them all, and to all other classes of errorists, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. ,

How could all the law, and all the prophets, hang on the two commandments recorded in the Birth and 39th verses of this chapter? The former of those commands declares man's supreme obligation to Jehovah, as his Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor, while the latter declares his supreme obligation to his neighbor. All that the Jewish law, and the Jewish prophets, commanded, in a Godward direction, was summed up in the command to love God with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength, while all that the Jewish law and prophets, commanded in a manward direction, was summed up in the requirement that the Jew should love his neighbor as himself. Are these commands binding on Christians? Yes; and to these the Savior has added the command, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matthew 5:44.)

What may we learn by considering the last interview between Jesus and the Pharisees, recorded in this chapter? The spiritual character of Christ's kingdom is thereby indicated. According to the revelations therein made Christ was not to be David's successor on earth, but should reign at God's right hand until his enemies should be made his "footstool." What effect should such revelation have on those who contend that Jesus is not yet a King, but that he will be a King at some date in the future, and will reign here on earth? It should be sufficient to confute and confound them.

CHAPTER XXIII

What is set forth in this chapter? An address of the Savior to his disciples concerning the scribes and Pharisees, is first set forth, and then an address of the Savior to the scribes and Pharisees in which he denounces their hypocrisy, and false reasoning, and indicates their final condemnation. The chapter is ended with a record of the Savior's lamentation over Jerusalem, an intimation concerning the overthrow of that city, and in regard to the favorable reception which the Jews will give him at some date in the future.

What is taught in the first part of this chapter? That the law, as given through Moses, was admitted, by the Savior, as still binding at the time mentioned in this chapter. This shows that the authority of the Jewish law did not end when the Gospel teaching began to be announced by John the Baptist, nor did it end in the course of Christ's personal ministry, but that the law and the Gospel lapped over each other. That is to say, the authority of the law continued during three years, or more, after Gospel teaching began to be made known. During that period even the disciples of Christ were required to observe the Jewish law.

What else may we learn in the first part of this chapter? We may learn that all the "works," of the scribes and Pharisees were done for outward show, and not for the inner life. We may also learn that Christ's disciples should not call any man "master," nor "father," in a religious sense, especially one that did not instruct them in the Gospel. In the light of such teaching, what should we say of that church which instructs its members to speak of their preachers as fathers, and to address them individually as "father?" We should say that they "do err, not knowing the scriptures." What may we say of the 11th and 12th verses of this chapter? We may regard them as another statement of the doctrine taught in chapter 20:26, 27. Therein the Savior declared that greatness in the kingdom of heaven consists in serving the best interests of others. Is the 13th verse of this chapter applicable to any class of teachers now on earth? Yes, it is applicable to all sectarian preachers, and all members of sectarian churches who follow the example of their teachers. By their false teaching they "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men," for they will not obey the Gospel of Christ so as to enter that kingdom themselves, and by that teaching they endeavor to confuse others so as to prevent them from entering it.

Are there any now living who make long prayers to cover their robbery of widows, and other poor persons? Yes; all covetous church members are, in some degree, in that class of hypocrites.

How could anyone be made "two-fold more the child of hell' than such "hypocrites" were as the Savior addressed in the 15th verse'? By making them doubly active, in actual wickedness, that end was accomplished. *And what may we say of the teaching, in regard to swearing,*

set forth in the speech which begins with the 16th verse, and ends with the 22nd? The reasoning of the scribes and Pharisees on that subject, and the Savior's exposure of that reasoning, set forth an important principle which all Christians, especially, should understand. The scribes and Pharisees separated, in thought, the temple from its gold, also the altar from the gift on the altar and thereby endeavored to relieve the consciences of those who had not performed the oaths which they had sworn by the temple, and by the altar. The Savior exposed the fallacy of their reasoning by declaring that the temple, and its gold, were inseparable, also that the altar, and the gift on it, were inseparable. Having done this he declared that the temple was inseparably connected with God who dwelt therein, also that heaven, the throne of God, and God himself, are all inseparably connected. What should such declarations of our Savior have prevented in all who have been permitted to read the Bible? They should have saved them from the sectarian folly of teaching a separation of Christ from his ordinances, and, thus, from declaring that mankind are saved by Christ, and not by ordinances. According to the Savior's declarations, in the text before us, he is inseparably connected with every ordinance that he gave, and, on the same principle, he is inseparably, connected with all that he commanded, promised, threatened, said. This being true, it is evident that all who teach that mankind are saved by Christ, and not by ordinances, are numbered with those whom the Savior designated "fools and blind." The same is true in regard to all who teach that mankind are saved by faith without obedience from the heart to "that form of doctrine" which is set forth in the Gospel. Are there any persons now living to whom the 23rd verse of this chapter may be justly applied? There are multitudes of them. That verse condemns all who teach that the doctrine of Christ consists of essentials and non-essentials. What is meant by the 24th verse of this chapter? A better translation reads thus: "Ye blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel." That speech implies that the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees was as absurd as for a man in eating to pick out, or strain out, of his food, a "gnat," yet could open his mouth and throat large enough to swallow a camel. The same is now true of all technical reasoners who profess to be Christians. Such reasoners are often very scrupulous about an idea, which is only a matter of inference, and in the advocacy of that idea they will

break down and scatter a congregation, or divide the entire church. They are like the self-willed man, of whom it is said that he would break the world up, if he could, in order to make a stool for himself to sit on. What classes of religious persons, now living, seem indicated in the 25th verse? All who think more of their appearance before mankind than they do of their real character before God. To what does the Savior liken such persons? He says they "are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." This is a weakness of many members. They are more concerned about a good appearance before mankind than they are about being really good before God. What may we learn by considering the 29th, 30th, 31st and 32nd verses? We may learn that the "scribes and Pharisees," whom the Savior addressed in this chapter, were self-deceived. They built "the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchers of the righteous," whom their fathers had slain, and said, "If we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets" yet they showed themselves to be, in disposition, the children of those who had killed the prophets, for they hated Christ, of whom the prophets had written, and he knew that they would finally clamor for his death, or would sanction the conduct of those who would demand that he should be put to death. Thus it is with many who now live. They imagine that they would not have united with those who opposed the Savior when he was on earth, yet they constantly oppose the humble disciples of Christ. They speak against those who called Christ "Beelzebub," —yet they speak of those disciples of Christ who oppose their devices by many reproachful names. They denounce those who said of Christ, "Away with him," yet they take delight in shutting those disciples out of their house of worship who cling to "the simplicity that is in Christ." In some instances they even rob those disciples of their own houses of worship. What is the bearing of the 35th verse of this chapter? It indicates that the Jews who would reject Christ, and his Apostles, would show themselves more wicked than all their wicked ancestors because they had sinned against truth more than all of them combined. In view of all this, what should we conclude with reference to those who, in the latter part of the Gospel Age, persecute Christ's true disciples, with

tongue and pen, and sometimes misapply the civil law to do them injury? They are as inexcusable as were those who demanded that the Savior should be crucified. What should we learn by considering the lamentation of the Savior over the city of Jerusalem, and his remark concerning his second coming? We should learn that Christ gave the people of Jerusalem abundant opportunities to be saved, but they would not accept them, and, that, as a result, they were, in the divine purpose, abandoned to their enemies. This is all indicated in the Birth and 38th verses. But what is the bearing of the last verse of this chapter? Its bearing is that when Christ would leave the earth the Jewish people would not see him again till after their conversion to him. When will their conversion be accomplished? Luke 21:24 and Revelation 11:13, taken together, indicate that after the Gentile nations will have been permitted to fulfil a certain divinely appointed period, then the Jews will be converted and will become the chief people of the earth. When that time will have come to pass, then the Jewish people will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." In Romans 11:23-28 we find clear evidence in favor of the conclusion that the Jewish people will, at some date in the future, become believers in Christ, and will be saved as a nation.

CHAPTER XXIV

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are, first of all, informed that after Jesus had departed from the temple his disciples called his attention to "the buildings of the temple." Then we are informed that Jesus told them that not one stone, of those buildings, should be left upon another, and that his disciples afterward inquired of him, privately, when that should come to pass, also what should be the sign of his "coming" and "of the end of the world" The remainder of this chapter sets forth the Savior's answer, to the mentioned inquiries, which his disciples made of him. What is the first part of the Savior's answer to his disciples in regard to the destruction of the temple? It is a warning that they should not be deceived by those who would come pretending to be Christ—the Messiah—whom the Jews were expecting, Then the Savior told his disciples that they should "should hear of wars and rumors of wars," and warned them that they should not be "troubled," because the end would not then be at hand. Next he told them of

other evils which should be "the beginning of sorrows." Next he informed them of persecutions which they should suffer, and of false prophets that should arise, and what the results would be, by way of deceiving many, and causing the love of many to grow cold. To this the Savior added, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Do false prophets, or teachers, still deceive many? They do. And is it still true that because iniquity abounds the love of many grows cold toward the Savior? It is. What consolation have true disciples while many are suffering themselves to be deceived, and to grow cold?" "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved"—this is their consolation. What special revelation is made in the 14th verse? The prophecy is therein stated that the Gospel should be preached to all nations, and that then "the end" should come. Did the Savior mean "the end of the world," or "the end" of the temple whose overthrow he mentioned in the second verse? He must have meant the end of the temple, and, thus, the destruction of Jerusalem, if we may judge by that which he said in the 15th verse, and to the end of the 28th verse, also by Luke 21:20, 21. These scriptures teach that Jerusalem should be compassed with armies, arrayed for its destruction, and that then the city of Jerusalem would be a dangerous place.

What is meant by "the abomination of desolation, mentioned in the 15th verse? In the light of Daniel 11, 30, 31 and the history of Josephus, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Pagan Rome I we are left to conclude that "the abomination of desolation," mentioned in this verse, referred to the Roman army, or, perhaps, to the standard, or flag, of that army. What is taught by the 20th verse? It simply means what it says. As the flight of Christ's disciples, from Jerusalem would be hurried, they would not be able to take much with them, and, therefore, if their flight should be in winter they would suffer, by reason of the cold, more than at any other season. Besides in Nehemiah 13:17-22 we learn of the observance of the sabbath which was established after the Jews had returned from their captivity in Babylon. Nor is this all. The criticisms which certain Jews offered on the Savior because he did not regard their notions concerning "the sabbath" show that if the disciples would have been compelled to leave Jerusalem on the sabbath they would

have been hindered by the Jews. See Matthew 12:10-14. They even took counsel to "destroy" the Savior because he had done a good deed on "the sabbath day." What should we say to those who urge the 20th verse of this chapter in favor of the doctrine that the seventh day of the week—the Jewish sabbath—should be observed by Christians? We should repeat in their hearing chapter 22:29,—"Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." Then we should remind them that the same kind of reasoning would show that Christians should observe the Jewish "winter." If not, why not? The "winter" and "the sabbath day" are both mentioned in the same verse, and in the same connection. Besides, the same reason was given with reference to the "winter" that is given with reference to "the sabbath." What is meant by the expression "elect's sake as found in the 20th verse? In I Peter 1:1, 2 we find the answer to this question. For the sake of those Jews who would accept the Gospel, and who would thereby become the elect according to the Gospel (Mark 13:20), the Savior said "those days" of "tribulation" should "be shortened." How those days were shortened, we are not informed in the Sacred Text, and we need not resort to secular history, on this subject for details which the Holy Spirit did not cause to be recorded. It is sufficient for us to be informed that "those days" of tribulation should be shortened for "the elect's sake." But this is not all. According to Romans 11:28 the divine Father did not intend that all the unbelieving Jews should be destroyed. But it was still true of them, as was declared in Isaiah 65:8, 9; Jeremiah 30:11; Zechariah 14:2, 3. Therefore, the Jews are still, in a certain sense, God's elect people. What may we learn by considering the 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th verses? We may learn that the second coming of Christ will not be an event so small that his disciples will need to hunt for it, but, on the contrary, it will be great enough to become apparent to all. This is indicated in Revelation 1:7; 11:14-18. In the light of such teaching, what may we conclude in regard to those who say that Christ has already come, and is now among mankind secretly gathering his faithful ones to himself? They "do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." What of the 28th verse? It is an illustration. See Job 39:30. The meaning is this: As the gathering of the eagles shows

plainly where the dead body is, so the events connected with the second coming of the Lord will show plainly the fact of his coming. This conclusion is unavoidable when the 27th and 28th verses are considered together. What should we say to those who tell us that the "carcass" here spoken of was the Jewish nation, while the "eagles" here mentioned referred to the representation of eagles on the Roman banners? We should say to them that such an idea discards the word "for" in the beginning of this verse, and breaks the connection between it and the previous verse which it was intended to explain. Moreover, in the 27th verse the Savior began to answer the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" and after stating that the sign should be very plain, even as "the lightning" that "cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west," he then mentioned another plain evidence of another plain event as an explanation of that which he had stated concerning his coming, namely, the event of eagles gathering about a dead body. What may we say of the word "immediately," as recorded in the first of the 29th verse? It should be considered in the light of Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8. Then we shall understand that we should not measure that word by our own ideas of its meaning as it is commonly used by mankind. Mark 13:24 says, "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened." This declaration in Mark shows that the word "immediately," in this 29th verse, refers to the end of the Gospel Age, and means that "the sun shall be darkened," before the end of "those days" which would come after the destruction of Jerusalem. When will the 29th verse be fulfilled? Revelation 6:12, 13 inform us that it will be when Christ, as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" will open the "sixth seal" of the book that will be given to him at some future date. And when will the 30th, verse of this chapter be fulfilled? Chapter 25:31, 32 indicate that it will be at some date in the future. Revelation 1:7 indicates the same. And what may we say of the 31st verse? Chapter 13:40, 41, 49 inform us that this will all take place at the end of the world. 'But what shall we say to those who declare that the word translated "world," in all these passages just referred to, is "aion," and not "kosmos," and therefore it means "age, or dispensation," and not this "material world"? We should say that while this is true concerning the word here trans-

lated "world," yet the connection in which it is used shows the meaning to be the Gospel Age, which must continue till the Millennial Age, mentioned in Revelation 20th chapter, Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 70, and, therefore, was destroyed in the Gospel Age. But how can we harmonize the 34th verse with all that has been stated about the end of the Gospel Age? In answer the statement may be made that the word translated "generation," in the 34th verse, also means "an interval of time , an age." But, accepting the translation, given in the "Common Version," attention should be called to the expression, "these things" as found in the 3rd verse, also in the 33rd, and 34th verses. The disciples inquired, "When shall these things be?" Then they asked him about the sign of his coming and the end of the world. He answered all these inquiries, but designated the destruction of Jerusalem under the heading, "those days" in the 22nd verse, and, then, in the 29th verse, began to state what will take place after "those days." Finally, the Savior turned attention again to the first question which, under the heading, "these things," referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, and declared, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." But the expression, "all these things , first refers to "the buildings of the temple." See 1st and 2nd verses. Then "these things," as an expression, refers to the destruction of the temple, and, in foretelling the destruction of the temple Christ foretold the destruction of Jerusalem. The period of its destruction he designated as "those days I "then told of his coming "after the tribulation of those days" and referred back to that which he had designated as "these things." and stated that the generation then living should not pass till all that he meant by "these things" should be fulfilled. That the explanation just stated is correct, is further evident from the expression "that day" as found in the 36th verse. The Savior told them about "these things," for he said they should "be fulfilled" before the generation then living should pass, but having done this he referred to another event of which he could not inform them. On the contrary, he said "of. that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. , In Mark 13:32, he declared that he did not know, at that time, when the period designated by the expression, "that day," should come to pass. But what did he mean by the expression, "that day"? The connection shows he meant the day when he will come again. Now the analysis is clear. All that is meant by the expression, "these things," referred to the

destruction of Jerusalem, which should be fulfilled before the generation then living would pass away, but "that day" is an expression referring to his second coming, and the time when he will come was wrapped in mystery, so that he could not tell when it would be. What is meant by the 40th and 41st verses of this chapter? I Corinthians 15:51, 52 and I Thessalonians 4:16, 17, taken together, clearly inform us on this subject. Those scriptures set forth that when , Christ will come again, the dead saints will be raised and be given immortal bodies, and, then, instantly, the living saints will be changed, without sleeping the sleep of death. In being changed their bodies will be made immortal, and, thus, all the saints will be taken from earth, to dwell forever with the Lord. When the time will come for that change to be made, then the sayings, now before us, will be fulfilled. Two men will be in many fields, and one of them will be a Christian while the other will not, even as is true every day now, at many places on the earth. In every instance of that kind, when Christ will come again, the Christian will be taken, and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding at the old-time hand mill, or doing some other kind of work, one of whom will be a Christian while the other one will not. Then the Christian will be taken , when Christ will come, while the other will be left.

What may we learn by considering the last part of this chapter? It consists of a command to "watch" for the second coming of Christ, and that command is enforced by an argument in favor of being always ready for his coming. The argument is set forth in an illustration of watching for a thief, and of faithfulness, on the part of a servant, in the absence of his master; also of unfaithfulness in a servant and its results. What should be the effect of the Savior's command to "watch," and the argument by which it is enforced? The command and argument, together, should cause all disciples of Christ to be always ready for his coming.

CHAPTER XXV

What are the outlines of this chapter of the Savior's teaching? The parable of ten virgins, the parable of the talents, and a statement of events that will be connected with the final judgment are the outlines of this division of Matthew's writings.

What is the first difference recorded in regard to the "wise" and the "foolish" virgins? The first difference is that the

"wise" virgins "took oil in their vessels with their lamps," while the "foolish" virgins took empty vessels. In all other respects both classes of virgins were alike, as far as the record informs us. They all waited for the bridegroom, and while they waited they "all slumbered and slept." But when the cry was made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," the wise virgins were ready to enter, but the foolish were not, and later they were denied the privilege of entering. And what was all this intended to illustrate? Two classes of Christians are hereby illustrated. Those who do all they can to prepare for death, and the final judgment, and, thus, do all they can by way of preparation to meet the Savior, before they give themselves to ease, are illustrated by the "wise" virgins. Those who give themselves to ease before preparing to meet the Savior in death, and the judgment, are illustrated by the "foolish" virgins. In view of the teaching of this parable, what is the only safe course for Christians, and all others of mankind? To "watch," and be always ready, is the only safe course for any one.

What is indicated by the declaration, "I know you not," as recorded in the last of the 12th verse? It indicates the same that is meant by the declaration, "I never knew you," as found in Matthew 7:23. The Savior meant in Matthew 7:23 that he never recognized those, as among his followers, who called on him in words only, and he illustrated that idea by speaking of the bridegroom, in the parable which we are considering, as saying to the "foolish" virgins, "I know you not." This implies that the Savior does not recognize any who try to serve him on a cheaper scale, or on easier terms, than he has set forth in his Gospel.

What may we learn by considering the parable of the "talents?" We may learn the importance of faithfulness. The "faithful" servant, who received two talents, was as highly commended, and rewarded, as was the "faithful" servant who had received five talents. This implies that if the servant who had received only one talent, had been "faithful" in handling it, he would have been as highly commended, and rewarded, as either of the other servants. But because he was unfaithful he was condemned.

What effect should the teaching of this parable have on those, in the Church, who have the least ability to take part in meetings, and to give for the support of the Lord's cause? It should cause them to consider that if they will be "faithful" in doing the little they can do, and in giving the little they can give, they will be commended and rewarded, even

as those will be who are faithful in doing and giving much. They should bear in mind that the promise is to the "faithful" whether they appear to be successful or not." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," is the divine promise. See Revelation 2:10.

But what is the common disposition of those who can do and give but little for the Lord's cause? They commonly think that they can do so little that it is not important for them to do anything, and they can give so little that they need not to give anything. This disposition will result in the eternal condemnation of millions. The Savior will not say, "Well done," to any one who does not do well, neither will he pronounce those "faithful" who are indifferent because they cannot make what the world designates a "success." The promise is not to the successful, but to the "faithful." Those who have the least ability will be, finally, commended and rewarded if they are only "faithful." Those who persist in doing the Lord's will in his way may not appear to be successful, but they should rejoice in the assurance that the promise is to the "faithful." What is the application of the 29th verse? The connection shows that it was intended to indicate that the servant who had been "faithful" in the use of what had been entrusted to him could be trusted with more, while the servant who had not been "faithful" in the use of what had been entrusted to his care should not have anything and should be punished for his unfaithfulness. What effect should this have on church members? It should encourage the faithful ones, and alarm those who are unfaithful. Those who are not faithful in that which is committed to them, whether it is much or little, should be terrified, and horrified, at the thought of their dangerous condition, especially when they consider the case of the unfaithful servant in the parable of the talents.

And what may Bible readers learn by studying the last part of this chapter? We may learn that fitness for heaven—salvation—will finally be determined by considerateness for Christ's disciples. We may also learn that fitness for perdition—condemnation—will finally be determined by slighting, or ignoring, Christ's disciples. This does not mean that obedience to the Gospel is not necessary to salvation, but it does mean that all obedience is a sham which does not result in considerateness toward Christ's disciples. In other words, all obedience is in vain which does not enable those who render it to recognize Christ's true disciples, and

to treat them kindly. This conclusion is set forth in I Timothy 1:5, and it indicates that all are in danger whose obedience to the Gospel has not developed in them sufficient charity—love—to cause them to recognize all true disciples of Christ, and then cause them to regard such disciples as representatives of Christ, and to treat them accordingly. In view of all this the conclusion is unavoidable that Christ is now represented on earth by his true disciples, and the treatment which such disciples receive he regards as given to himself. This being true, it is evident that mankind are divided into two classes, namely, those who treat Christ well, and those who mistreat him. This is certainly true wherever even one true disciple lives, and especially where a church of true disciples is established. What may we conclude in regard to those who profess to be true disciples, but will mistreat all those who endeavor to show them that they have deviated from Christ's teaching? By such misconduct they show that they are sectarians, and not Christ's disciples, and, the danger is, that in the last day Christ will say to them, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," for I endeavored to correct you when you deviated from my word, and you became offended at me, and mistreated me, and hated me. If those professed disciples should then say, Lord, when did we thus mistreat you? he could answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me." I say there is danger that thus it will be in the last great day, for those professed disciples who cherish hatred for all true disciples who would correct them. Certainly they would not help such disciples if they found them in distress. On the contrary, they would rather increase their distress, and we should always remember that everything said or done, in that direction, the Lord Jesus regards as done unto himself; 1 Corinthians 8:12 emphasizes this conclusion, and should terrify all those who mistreat, ignore, or, in any respect, disregard any one of Christ's brethren. What may we learn by considering the 41st verse of this chapter? We may learn that perdition was not "prepared" for mankind, but "for the devil and his angels." In the light of this, what becomes of the saying that, "God is too good to send a human being to hell because of a few sins"? Such a saying is condemned as inexcusable nonsense. Perdition was prepared for the devil, and his angels, who rebelled against God, and if human beings follow the example of the devil and his angels, in rebelling against God, they show

that they prefer the association of such. Therefore God only proposes to give them what they show that they prefer. Acts 13:46 is further evidence in this direction. When certain Jews contradicted, and blasphemed, "Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, 10, we turn to the Gentiles." This shows, in the clearest possible manner, that those who refuse to obey the Gospel, do, in God's estimation, "judge" themselves "unworthy of everlasting life." This being true, why should not the Judge of all the earth finally gave them according to their own decision in regard to themselves? And why should the intimation be made that God will be unjust in sending persons to perdition who have already decided, by their own rejection of the divine word, that they are "unworthy of everlasting life"? All such intimations are the outgrowth of ignorance in regard to the Bible. Mankind decide their own eternal destiny, and the great Judge will only repeat, in the final day, the decision which they will have rendered. What is taught by the last verse of this chapter? The truth is therein taught that the "punishment" of the wicked will continue as long as the "life" of the righteous will endure. The same word, in the original text, which is translated by the word, "eternal," with reference to the righteous, is translated, "everlasting," with reference to the wicked. Moreover, all efforts to show that punishment will necessarily end are in vain. By reason of the spirit which is formed within man (Zechariah 12:1), he is destined to exist forever. And if he will not consent to exist with God, and his angels, he will be compelled to exist with "the devil and his angels." To his ancient people God said, "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." (Ezekiel 18:32.) And to those who live in the Gospel Age the Lord says that "he is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9.) Nevertheless, if mankind will not repent, but will "judge" themselves "unworthy of everlasting life," they will "go away into everlasting punishment." But may not persons live in disobedience to God, and repent when they come to die? Disobedient persons generally repent when they come to die, but their repentance is not of a "godly sort," for it is not the result of "godly sorrow," but is produced by fear of death, and of the final judgment, and, therefore, is produced by "the sorrow of the world."

(See 2 Corinthians 7:10, 11.) Such repentance "worketh death," as is indicated in the case of Judas Iscariot. (See chapter 27:1-5.) The case of the thief on the cross, who repented, prayed, and was accepted, is often mentioned. But he lived, and died, in the Jewish Age, and his case cannot be justly cited in favor of death-bed repentance in the Gospel Age, especially with reference to persons who have many times rejected the Gospel. The only possibility of "repentance to salvation," at the close of a person's life, is in the case of one who never before heard the Gospel, or had an opportunity to hear it, so as to learn the way of salvation. Such a person might repent, and be baptized, acceptably, while in a dying condition. But those who have heard, and learned their duty, or have had abundant opportunity to learn it, cannot find an intimation in the Bible in favor of death-bed repentance for themselves. But Proverbs 1:24 32; 29:1 together indicate their doom.

CHAPTER XXVI

What is set forth in this division of Matthew's record? First of all, mention is made of the fact that "two days" before "the feast of the passover" the Savior foretold his betrayal and death, also, mention is made, of a consultation, on the part of prominent Jews, in regard to putting him to death. Next we are informed of certain events which occurred, and of words that were spoken, at the house of a certain man in the town of Bethany, near Jerusalem, also of a prophecy which the Savior uttered in regard to a certain woman. The conduct of Judas Iscariot is then recorded, likewise the preparing of the passover, eating it, and the communion of bread and wine, which was introduced, and ordained, at the conclusion of the passover. Then we read of an interview of our Savior, with his disciples, in regard to his death, and their conduct with reference to him. We read also of his sorrow, of his prayer in the garden, named Gethsemane, of the fact that Judas and a "great multitude" came to take him, of the fact that he suffered himself to be taken, that he was led before the high priest, was falsely accused, that Peter denied him, and afterward wept because he had denied him.

What may we say of the 13th verse of this chapter? It records a prophecy which has been fulfilled, and will continue to be fulfilled till the close of time.

What may we learn of the Apostle Peter by considering his record as given in this chapter? He was a very impulsive man.

And what may we say of the Savior's prayer as here recorded? It informs us that, even to the utmost, he was subject to his Father's will, and, thereby, indicates the disposition that his disciples should always possess when they pray to the Father: I John 5:14 further indicates that disposition. In view of this, what may be said of most of the praying that is done by professed Christians? It is not the to the Savior's example, and, for that reason, is not acceptable to the Father. Only when we are wholly subject, to the Father's will, are we acceptable in his sight. Much of the so-called praying that is done, by professed Christians, when in distress, is clamoring rather than praying. The bearing of it is, not Thy will, but mine, be done. All who are in that condition of mind would be injured, rather than benefitted, if the Father would answer their prayers.

What is the application of the 52nd verse? It applies, first of all, to carnal warfare, and teaches that those who take the sword provoke others to draw the sword against themselves, and, therefore, are liable to perish with the sword. In other words, they expose themselves to death by the sword. But this is not all. The Savior intended to teach that his people should not use the sword in his defense, and, thereby, to indicate that they should not advocate his Cause by means of the sword. Why then did he recommend, in Luke 22:36, that a "sword" should be bought? In order to teach the lesson which we have just learned in regard to this subject, namely, that his disciples should not use the sword in his defense, nor to advocate his Cause. (See also John 18:36.) What should we conclude when we consider the 53rd and 54th verses? We should conclude that though the divine Father gave his Son for mankind, yet the Son gave himself. (See also Galatians 1:4.) Therefore we should love the Father, because he so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for us, and we should love the Son because he so loved the world that he gave himself for us. One of God's purposes, in giving Christ to die for us, and one of Christ's purposes in consenting to die for us, was to break down the enmity which sin had made, in mankind, and produce in us the "faith which works by love." (See Galatians 5:6; 1 John 4:19.) When such faith is produced, in mankind, then all obedience to the divine will is a delight, and all suffering for the Savior's name is a joy. All reluctance, indifference, carelessness, in regard to the divine will is then at an end. We love" God "because he first loved us," and we delight to do his will because we love him, when we have the "faith which works by love,"

CHAPTER XXVII

Of what are we informed, in this division, of Matthew's record? We are first informed that prominent Jews took counsel against Jesus, bound him, and delivered him to the Roman governor, who was chief earthly ruler in Jerusalem, at that time. Next we are informed concerning Judas who repented, and hanged himself, also of the prophecy which was fulfilled by the use which was made of the money which he brought "to the chief priests and elders" when he showed his repentance. Then we read of the trial of Jesus, the choosing of Barabbas, the condemnation of Jesus, his crucifixion, the mistreatment which he received while he was on the cross, and that a scripture was fulfilled in regard to the parting of his garments among the soldiers who crucified him, also of the "accusation" which the Roman governor wrote, and caused to be placed, on the cross, over the head of Jesus. Next we read of his death on the cross, of the fact that the vail of the temple was "rent in twain from the top to the bottom," that there was an earthquake, and a rending of rocks, and an opening of graves, also of the fact that, at a later date, "many bodies of the saints which slept arose." Finally, we read of the impression which the events connected with the death of Jesus made on the centurion, who commanded the soldiers that crucified him, after which we read of certain women who viewed the crucifixion "afar off," and then we read of the burial of the body of Jesus, also of the effort made to prevent its resurrection.

What is the difference between the sorrow which Peter showed, as mentioned in the last of the preceding chapter, and the sorrow which Judas showed, as mentioned near the first of this chapter? 2 Corinthians 7:10 indicates the difference. Peter felt the sorrow which works "repentance unto salvation" when he "remembered the words of Jesus." That was "godly sorrow," or Godward sorrow. But Judas felt sorry, and repented, when he saw that he had made a fatal mistake, and his sorrow led to despair, by reason of which he committed suicide. That was "the sorrow of the world which works death," or the kind of sorrow which worldlings feel when they learn that they have made a fatal mistake by committing a crime. As a result, they are often driven to insanity, and commit suicide.

What should we answer those who read the 11th verse of this chapter, and then say that Jesus "evaded giving a direct answer to the question of Pilate, whether he was king of the Jews"? We should answer that, in different ages and

languages, different forms of speech are used, also that John 18:36 is a clear admission. In that verse Jesus admitted that he was a king by using the expression, "my kingdom," three times.

What scripture did Jesus fulfil by his silence before Pilate, the Roman Governor) Isaiah 53:7 was thereby fulfilled.

What disposition in mankind did the Jews illustrate when they rejected Jesus, and chose a robber? They illustrated the disposition which causes multitudes to turn from the counsel of their best friends, and adopt the counsel of their worst enemies. This is a common weakness. Very few of earth's millions are wise enough to know their best friends, and to know how to avoid their worst enemies.

What may we say of the question recorded in the 22nd verse? We may safely speak of it as the most difficult question which Pontius Pilate was ever required to decide. He had several strong reasons for regarding Jesus as innocent of the accusations made against him, and he desired to avoid condemning him. But under the pressure of the clamor that was made against Jesus he yielded, and condemned him. The question, "What shall I do then with Jesus who is called Christ?" afterwards was presented to the Jewish people at Jerusalem for individual decision. At a later date it was presented to the people in the city of Samaria, and still later it was urged on the Gentiles. Among all nations it has, in some measure, been presented, as the centuries of the Gospel Age have come upon the world, and, in one form or another, it is daily presented to millions who now live in Bible lands. What should we say to those who declare that Pontius Pilate was a "coward"? We should ask them to consider that though he was governor, yet he had only a small garrison of soldiers to regulate the people of Jerusalem, also that the strength of the Jewish nation was then in that city, for the time of the Jewish passover was at hand. Moreover, they should consider that the time had come for Jesus to be crucified for the sins of the world, and, therefore, it was necessary for Pilate to pronounce sentence on him. What may we conclude from the "accusation," which was placed above the head of Jesus, when he was crucified? We may conclude that those who deny that Jesus is a King are wrong. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, unite in bearing testimony that Jesus was declared King, for they did not intimate that Pilate had not set forth the truth in the "ac-

cusation" which he had written. Besides, Colossians 1:13 is clear evidence on this subject. In Psalm 89:2-4, 35-37, a promise was made and confirmed by an oath, and that promise, thus confirmed, is in Acts 2:29-33 declared as fulfilled in Christ, when he was raised from the dead, and seated on the right hand of God in heaven. With these scriptures before our minds we can understand what Jesus meant when he said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), and what Paul meant when he declared that certain Christians had been "translated into the kingdom" of God's "dear Son." (Colossians 1:13.) Is the intimation, that the Father had "forsaken" his Son, as set forth in the 46th verse, correct? It is correct. Why was this necessary? We are not definitely informed, but Isaiah 53rd chapter indicates that it was a part of God's arrangement, and, therefore, was necessary. This fact should overwhelm mankind, and cause them to be always filled with gratitude. The fact that the divine Father so loved the world of mankind that he arranged a plan of redemption which required him to give the highest and best being in the Universe—the next being to himself—to live, and suffer, and bleed, and then to be "forsaken" of God and die the shameful death of the cross, in man's behalf—this fact should cause the world of mankind to feel overwhelmed. All rebellion against God's will should end as soon as this fact is made known, and certainly all rebellion against the will of God does end in proportion as the love of God and Christ, for mankind, is duly considered. What should Bible readers learn by considering the 52nd and 53rd verses of this chapter? They should learn the importance of considering exactly what the Sacred Text declares. Matthew here informs us that "the graves were opened," and then declares that "many bodies of the saints arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection"; that is, "after" the resurrection of Christ. What should we say to those who affirm, on the basis of these verses, that all the saints, then numbered with the dead, arose, and that Christ took them with him to heaven when he ascended? We should read to them Acts 2:34, also Hebrews 11:39, 40. Is there anything remarkable in the 57th verse of this chapter? Yes; it sets forth the expression "Jesus' disciple," and this expression is the nearest that we can find to the common expression—"disciples of Christ." We can find "the disciples" "thy disciples" and "his disciples" 7, but not "Christ's disciples" nor "disciples of Christ." This should be remem-

bered in order to avoid affirming that the expression "disciples of Christ" is, as an expression, found in the New Testament , and in order to avoid the mistake of using the expression as if it was a New Testament name for Christians.

What may we say of the precaution shown by those "chief priests and Pharisees," who requested Pilate that "the sepulcher," in which the body of Jesus had been laid, should be "made sure until the third day," to prevent Christ's "disciples" from stealing the body, and, then, saying that it had been raised? Their precaution was in vain, even as all other precaution is, when arranged against the decrees of God. see what the Lord declared in Isaiah 44:24, 25.

CHAPTER XXVIII

And of what does this chapter—the last in Matthew's record inform us? This chapter sets forth a statement of certain facts concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and declares that, after his resurrection, he appeared to certain women, and told them where his "brethren" should see him. A statement is also recorded, in this chapter, that some of those who had watched the sepulcher, to make it "sure showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done," and that they were bribed by those priests to report a falsehood, and thereby prevent the truth in regard to the resurrection from being known. We are next informed that the disciples went to the place where Jesus had proposed to meet them, and that they saw him there, also that some "worshiped him," but others "doubted." Then we read that Jesus spoke to them, and gave to them the commission to go, and "teach all nations," also that they should baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and, then, that they should teach the baptized ones all things that he had commanded them. The chapter is ended with a record of the promise that Christ would be with his Apostles always. What may we learn by considering the first verse of this chapter? We may learn, and should learn, that the Jewish sabbath, during which the body of Jesus was in the grave, ended in the morning when the first of the new week "began to dawn."

What should Bible readers conclude from the statement made, in the first part of this chapter, concerning the appearance, and power, of the angel that was present at the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the sepulcher where it had been

laid? We should conclude that all opposition to God is madness, and all planning against his decrees is folly. He had decreed that Jesus should be raised from the dead, and all precautions against that decree were in vain. God has myriads of angels, to whom he has given magnificent might and power, and through them he can execute his decrees according to his own good pleasure. He is infinite in all his attributes, and unlimited in all his powers, and therefore he can ordain whatever is right, and execute whatever he ordains. But what should we conclude from the fact that an angel of might and power, whose "countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow," spoke comforting words to certain women who went to the sepulcher soon after the body of Jesus had been raised? Our conclusion should be in the light of Hebrews 1:14. Angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." And this conclusion should cause the hearts of Christians to overflow with gratitude to God for his care in their behalf, and his desire for their eternal salvation. It should also cause sinners to become Christians. And what may we say in regard to the word "brethren," as found in the 10th verse of this chapter? It reveals the relationship which exists between Christ and his disciples, even as is indicated in Hebrews 2:11, 12. Here is another reason why the hearts of Christians should be filled with gratitude to the Father of all mercies. The risen, and exalted, Redeemer calls them his "brethren." This is also a reason why sinners should turn from their sinful ways and become Christians. What decision should we render in regard to the disposition of "the chief priests" and "elders" of the Jews, when they heard that Christ had been raised from the dead? They showed themselves genuine sectarians, and they have many imitators among professed Christians. Thus it has been; thus it is; and thus it will be. Sectarians are wrong, and they continue in wrong by determination. They are unwilling to think that they may be wrong, and, for that reason, are not willing to investigate in any direction which might show them that they are wrong. What is the secret of such a disposition? Solomon indicates in Proverbs 26:12. Religious error begets religious conceit, and such conceit tends to exclude the disposition to investigate in order to learn what truth is, and what it requires. Besides, doing wrong begets hatred of that which is right. See John 3:19, 20.

This is specially true of religious wrong. Immoral men will, generally, acknowledge that they are bad men, and will, sometimes, commend those who reprove them for their immorality. But those who are religiously wrong, are, generally, of the opposite disposition. They hate the light which condemns them, and hate those who urge the light upon them. In view of this the remark has been made that "a religious devil is much worse than an irreligious devil." Religious error seems to be a mental poison, and those afflicted with it seem, both mentally and religiously, perverted, disarranged, and degraded. Such error caused the Jewish nation to hate their Messiah, to demand that he should be crucified, to reject his Gospel, and to persecute his Church. As a punishment for their hatefulness they have been a despised, and scattered people, for over eighteen centuries, and the end of their miseries is not yet evident. What may we learn by considering the 18th verse of this chapter? That verse indicates that the Father had transmitted to the Son the power—the authority—to rule everything "in heaven and in earth," and the declaration which that verse sets forth on this subject should cause all Bible readers to be filled with reverence for Christ) even as they reverence the Father. Because the Son had perfectly submitted to the Father's will, therefore, the Father gave his will to the Son to execute. Because of this the Son "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet," and then will come "the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." (I Corinthians 15:24, 25.) In view of this teaching concerning Christ's authority and dominion, what may be safely said to those who declare that Jesus is not yet "King" and that he will not be made "King" till he will come again. "Ye do err," "not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God," may be said to them, even as the Savior said to certain Sadducees when he was, personally, among mankind. (See Matthew 22:29.) To whom was the commission, recorded in the 19th and 20th verses, of this chapter, given? It was given to the eleven Apostles. Was it ever extended to any others? Yes; it was extended to Matthias, who was "numbered with the eleven Apostles," and afterwards was spoken of as one of the "twelve" Apostles. (See Acts 1:26; 6:2. 1 Corinthians 15:5.) Besides, it was extended to the Apostle Paul. (See Acts 26:16-18.) Was that commission ever extended to any others? No. May any others justly apply its authority to

themselves? No. Why not? Because they cannot do so without presumption. Does the New Testament inform us in regard to any one who was not an apostle, but who desired apostolic power or authority? It does. In Acts 8:18, 19 we learn that Simon, who had been a "sorcerer," in Samaria, desired a measure of that "power," and thought it could be obtained for money. But he was told that he was "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity," and that he should repent of his "wickedness and pray God if perhaps, the thought" of his heart might be "forgiven" him. (See Acts 8:22, 23.)

What effect should the case of Simon, who had been a "sorcerer," have on all others who read the New Testament? It should cause them to fear and tremble at the thought of applying to themselves the commission which Christ gave to his Apostles. Simon thought he could purchase a measure of it with money, and the rebuke, which Peter gave him, indicates that the Lord did not intend any part of that commission for any others. Moreover, those who apply it to themselves are guilty of a presumption as irreverent as that manifested by those "vagabond Jews," mentioned in Acts 19:13-16.

What may we say of those who declare that they receive their commission to preach from the last commission of Christ to his Apostles? They "do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." The signs of Apostleship do not accompany them, and a commission without credentials is like a law without a penalty, or like a pretended baptism in the Holy Spirit without the power to speak with new tongues; that is, speak languages that were never studied by those speaking them. What of those who deny that anyone is now baptized with the Holy Spirit, and, yet, declare that the last commission of Christ to his Apostles authorizes them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel? The inconsistency of all who thus declare is pitiable, and in them is fulfilled the saying set forth in Romans 2:1. They judge that those are wrong who presume they have been baptized with the Holy Spirit, yet presume that they are authorized to execute the last commission of Christ to his Apostles, who were baptized with the Holy Spirit to prepare them to do the work required by that commission. Therefore those guilty of such presumption are inexcusable.

But what shall we answer those who say that the Apostles are dead, and preachers of Christ now occupy their positions? We should inform them that though the Apostles are dead,

personally, yet they are alive, officially, and will be until the end of time. To this the Savior referred when he said, "lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Christ is still with the Apostles, they are, officially, in position and power, even as he authorized them when he gave them his last commission. The presumption that the Apostles are dead, and need successors, is the foundation error on which the apostate church, and all its branches, are based. Roman Catholicism, the Greek church, and all forms of Protestant sectarianism, are the outgrowth of the supposition that the Apostles are dead, and should have successors, or that their authority now belongs to those who presume to be preachers of the Gospel.

On what basis can a Christian presume to preach the Gospel? On the basis of 2 Timothy 4:1, 2. The Apostles did not need to study, but spoke as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4.) Timothy needed to be told what to preach, and needed to study. (See 2 Timothy 2, 14, 15.) Therefore, uninspired preachers do not rank with the Apostles, but, if they are Christians, they rank, in some measure, with Timothy. Has any one except a Christian a right to preach Christ, or make him known? Revelation 22, 17 indicates that whoever bears of Christ has the right to invite persons to "come" to Christ. What should we say to those who use the 19th verse of this chapter as a basis for trine immersion, or a three-fold baptism—once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Spirit? We should refer them to Luke 9:26, and show that if their reasoning is correct, then Christ will need to come three times—once in "his own glory," once "in his Father's glory, and once in the glory "of the holy angels." Then we should tell them that the doctrine of "trine immersion," and a three-fold coming of the Savior, are proved by the same kind of reasoning, and both are condemned by direct divine testimony (see Matthew 25:31, Ephesians 4:5), and by all other scriptures which set forth the doctrine that Christ will come again, and by all those which mention water baptism.

Does the expression "all things," in the 20th verse, refer to "all things" that Christ commanded them to teach, or, all things" which he commanded them "to observe"? It must refer to "all things" that he commanded them to teach, for he had commanded them to "observe" the Jewish law. See chapter 23, 1-3. But see Romans 10:4.

What may be safely affirmed of Matthew's record of Jesus Christ? Its style as a record, also its facts and truths, together proclaim its divine origin. In both matter and manner it challenges the attention of all mankind. Those who study it till they understand it will be convinced that it is true.

MARK

CHAPTER I

What may Bible readers learn in this chapter, the first of the record now before us? We may first learn that Mark wrote of Jesus Christ, also of John the Baptist as the one who was divinely ordained to prepare a people for Christ, and of multitudes who accepted John's preaching. Then we learn of John the Baptist's clothing, food, and preaching; also that Jesus was baptized of John in the river Jordan, after which the Holy Spirit came upon him, and he was publicly acknowledged as the beloved Son of God in whom the Father was well pleased. Next we learn of the temptation of Jesus, in the wilderness, of his preaching, of the fact that he called Simon and Andrew, also James and John, to become his followers, also that they went with him into a city named "Capernaum," where he "astonished" many by his "doctrine." An account then is given of a man who was possessed of "an unclean spirit," of what that "spirit" said to Jesus, of the fact that Jesus cast him out of the man he possessed, and of the effect thereof on the people who became aware of it. The curing of Simon's wife's mother of a fever, and what she did when cured, and the fact that Jesus cured many others, we next find in this chapter. After the events just mentioned we learn that Jesus went "into a solitary place," in the morning before daylight, "and there prayed"; also that Simon, and others, "followed after him," "found him," and told him that all men were seeking for him. Then we learn that Jesus, and several with him, went to other places, that he cleansed a leper, and after cleansing him charged him not to tell any one about it, but to show himself to the priest, and make the offering required by the law. The chapter ends with a statement of what the cleansed leper did, and of its results on the ministry of the Savior.

Who was the writer of this record of the Gospel? Acts 12:12, 25 indicate that his full name was John Mark, also that his mother's name was Mary, and that he was chosen by Barnabas and Saul to travel with them. 1 Peter 5:13 indicates that he was converted to Christ under the Apostle Peter's preaching.

What is the difference between the beginning of Matthew's record, and the beginning of Mark's? Matthew began by giving an account of the earthly ancestry of Jesus Christ, while Mark began with a statement concerning Jesus Christ as "the Son of God."

Why was the baptism which John preached spoken of as "the baptism of repentance"? It was inseparably connected with the repentance which he preached, and thus belonged to it. With what end in view did John preach "the baptism of repentance"? "The remission of sins" was the end in view.

What effect should this end, as here indicated, have on Bible readers? It should prevent them from thinking that "remission of sins," or forgiveness of sins, for alien sinners, is independent of baptism in water. John's baptism was water baptism (see 8th verse), and it was connected with "repentance," and with remission of sins. It was a part of the change which repentance required, or was, in some other respect, so connected with it, that it was designated "the baptism of repentance," and it was "for," "unto," or "into," "the remission of sins," or "the forgiveness of sins." Besides, in Luke 7:29, 30, we learn that those who refused John's baptism "rejected the counsel of God against themselves." In the light of all this what may we safely conclude in regard to the value of water baptism in "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"? We may safely conclude, and must conclude, that water baptism was, then, necessary to salvation, in the case of those who had never been Christians. And, what effect should this have on Bible readers by way of preparing them to consider the value of water baptism when the Gospel was fully preached? We should be, thereby, prepared to consider it favorably, and to avoid speaking of it as -unnecessary, if we are not authorized so to speak of it by divine revelation recorded in other places. But is there any revelation, in any part of the Bible, which authorizes us to speak of water baptism unfavorably? There is not. But in Acts 2:38 it is mentioned, as a command to be obeyed, before remission of sins was promised to those who had never been Christians. "Repent and be baptized," are commands to alien sinners, while "Repent . . . and pray" are commands addressed to baptized believers when they sin. See Acts 2:38; 8:22.

Should we base an argument, in favor of baptism, on the kind of "raiment" which John the Baptist wore? No. The Sacred Text does not indicate that we should do so, but it informs us concerning his "raiment" without stating the reason. What kind of "locusts" did he eat? Leviticus 11:22

indicates that the “locusts” here mentioned were of an order of insects.

What is taught in the 7th and 8th verses? The greatness of Christ is therein taught.

What is meant by the expression, “driveth him into the wilderness,” as found in the 12th verse? Another meaning of the Greek word here translated “driveth,” is “send forth,” and this is the idea, as is indicated by the word “led” in Matthew 4:1.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to be “tempted of Satan,” and to be “with the wild beasts,” in “the wilderness”? In Hebrews 2:10, 17, 18; 4:14, 15 ; 5:8, 9, is set forth the answer to this question. Those scriptures show that it was necessary for Jesus to have a severe, and varied, experience in trial, and suffering, in the flesh, in order that he might know, by experience, how to sympathize with his followers in their earthly trials and temptations, and help them, in their times of need.

In what respect did “angels” minister to Jesus? We are not informed, but, in view of the fact that he “ had fasted forty days and forty nights,” and, therefore, was very hungry, we may, in the light of 1 Kings 19:4-8, scripturally conclude that “the angels” brought food to Jesus.

Why did Jesus command repentance before belief, as recorded in the 15th verse? He was preaching to the Jews who had sinned against God under the Jewish law, which was, at that time, still in force. See Matthew 8:4; 23:1-3. For this reason it was necessary for the Jews to whom Jesus preached to repent of the sins they had committed under the law, in order that they might believe the Gospel in an acceptable manner. What may we say of those who use these commands—“repent ye, and believe the gospel”—as an argument in favor of the doctrine that repentance on the part of Gentile sinners, who have never been under the Jewish law, is now necessary before faith? We may say to them that they “do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” But suppose they urge Acts 20:21 in their favor? We should inform them that the Greeks, as well as the Jews, to whom Paul referred in Acts 20:21, had been taught in the Jewish law. This was certainly true of the Jews, also true of the Greeks in proportion as they had learned of the religion of the Jews. Moreover, we should say to all who contend for repentance before faith, on the part of Gentiles, that neither Jew nor Gentile could repent, acceptably, toward God, without believing in him. See Hebrews 11:6. Nor is this all.

The idea that either Jew or Gentile would try to repent, or think of repenting, toward God, without believing in him, is an absurdity.

What may we learn by considering the 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the “unclean spirit” which possessed the man, mentioned in those verses, knew more than the Jews, generally, knew, and more than the disciples, at that time, understood, concerning the character of Jesus. We may also learn that the mentioned “spirit” feared Jesus, and desired to be let alone, and, finally, that he did to the man he possessed all the harm he could before leaving him. What is meant by the word “unclean,” when applied to the word “spirit” in the 23rd verse of this chapter? The Greek word thus translated means, “unclean , impure, lewd,” but whether that word was applied to the kind of spirit here mentioned, because it was in itself “unclean,” or because it led the man it possessed to do “impure” or “lewd” acts , we are not able to determine. But why did that “unclean spirit” fear Jesus, and request to be let alone? In Matthew 8:29 we find the question “Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” This indicates the meaning of the word “destroy” in the 24th verse of this chapter. Moreover, Matthew 8:29, taken with the 24th verse of this chapter, shows that the word “destroy,” when used in regard to the punishment of the wicked, means “to torment.” What effect should this have on those who say that the word “destroy,” when thus used, means to annihilate, or blot out, of all existence? it should confute, and confound, and convert, them. Why did the “unclean spirit,” here mentioned, do the man he possessed all the harm he could before leaving him? We are not informed, but may decide this question aright by considering the fact that when evil characters, that have been connected with the church, are excluded from it, they often do the church all the harm that they can before leaving it.

What is the bearing of the command, “offer for thy cleansing,” as recorded in the 44th verse? In Leviticus 14th chapter we find the law for the legal cleansing of any Jew who had been healed of his leprosy. Therefore, the command, “offer for thy cleansing” referred to legal cleansing, after the actual cleansing had been accomplished.

What should we say to those who teach that the word “for, in the expression, “for thy cleansing,” means the same that it does in the expression, “for the remission of sins,” in the 38th verse of Acts 2nd chapter? We should inform them

that the Greek word translated “for” in one of those passages is very different from the word thus translated in the other. In the scripture before us the word means “about, concerning, respecting,” but the word translated “for” in Acts 2:38, means “into, to, as far as, to the extent of, in order to, for, with a view to.”

What may we learn by considering the 45th verse? We may learn that Jesus had a good reason for commanding the cleansed leper not to tell what had been done to him, and for charging others not to make him known. Mankind were so desirous to be healed of their physical ailments that they were easily excited over any one who possessed, or even pretended to possess, special healing power. Jesus knew this, and also knew that he possessed the power to heal mankind of all their physical ailments. Therefore he knew that, in order not to be hindered in his mission of mercy, he needed to adopt precautions to prevent the people of any city where he was, performing his wonders, from learning in regard to him. This is altogether different from that which is now true in regard to healers, and pretended healers. Jesus did not need to advertise, but needed to forbid others in regard to advertising him. But are not mankind now so desirous to be healed of their physical ailments that they are easily excited over any announcement of a special healer? Many of them are, and by reason of their ignorance of the Bible seem to discard their common sense in going after any pretended faith cure healer.

CHAPTER II

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We find information here given of Jesus healing a palsied man, of Jesus calling Levi who is elsewhere spoken of as Matthew, of Jesus eating in the house of Levi, and of a criticism that was offered, by “scribes and Pharisees,” because he ate with “publicans and sinners,” also of what he said in response to that criticism. Next we are informed of an interview which Jesus had with “the disciples of John” the Baptist, and with certain disciples of the Pharisees, in regard to fasting. The chapter is ended, with an account of a criticism which certain Pharisees offered in regard to the disciples of Jesus eating of the standing grain, in the fields, on the “sabbath day,” and a record of the response which he made to their criticism.

What may we learn by considering the “faith” of those four persons who carried the palsied man, mentioned in this

chapter, and placed him before the Savior? They showed “their faith” by their earnestness, and from that fact we may learn how to show our faith.

May the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter be used in favor of the doctrine that sins were really pardoned before Jesus died? These verses may be thus used. Does this imply that sins were pardoned independent of the death of Christ? No. But they were pardoned in view of his death.

What is taught by the 17th verse of this chapter? That verse was intended to set forth the absurdity of the criticism which “the scribes and Pharisees” offered on Jesus for eating and drinking with “publicans and sinners.” His reference to those who needed “a physician,” was an illustration of the fact that “sinners” were the very ones who needed him.

What is taught by the 19th verse? The Savior's reference to “the children of the bride chamber”—the most honored guests at an ancient marriage feast—was intended to illustrate that while he was with his disciples they would not need to “fast,” but that they should “fast” after he would leave them. The 21st and 22nd verses were intended to set forth the impropriety of mixing old Jewish customs with the new doctrine which he had commenced to teach.

What was the special criticism which “the Pharisees” offered on Christ's disciples in regard to eating grain? Their criticism was in regard to eating on the sabbath day. Deuteronomy 23:25 gave the Jews privilege thus to eat, but “the Pharisees” pretended to think that they should not have exercised that privilege on the sabbath day. What was the bearing of the Savior's response? It was to the effect that when mankind were hungry they should not be prevented from eating by a technical interpretation of any Jewish law. The 27th verse informs us that man is greater than the sabbath. The 28th verse declares that Jesus is “Lord,” or Master, of the sabbath. Thus from the viewpoint of man's greatness, and of his own lordship, the Savior exposed the criticism which “the Pharisees” had offered on his disciples in regard to eating of standing grain on the sabbath day.

Are Christians under obligations to observe the Jewish sabbath? No. It was a part of the Jewish law, and in Romans 10:4 Paul declares, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.”

What will become of Gentile Christians who observe the Jewish sabbath, as a part of their religion? Galatians 5:1-4 clearly indicate that they will be lost. Gentile Christians

should not observe the Jewish sabbath any more than they should observe Jewish circumcision.

CHAPTER III

What are the facts set forth in this chapter? The fact that Jesus, on the sabbath day, healed a man who had a withered hand, that certain prominent Jews, called Pharisees and Herodians, “took counsel” in order to “destroy him,” that Jesus “withdrew himself with his disciples, to the sea,” was followed by many, preached to them, and healed the afflicted among them—these facts are here set forth. Besides, we find a record of the fact that Jesus called and “ordained” twelve men to be “with him, that he might send them forth to preach,” also that he “surnamed” several of them. Next, we find a record of the fact that Jesus and his disciples were crowded by the multitudes of people, and that certain of “his friends” said of him, “He is beside himself.” Then we find an account of the fact that certain “scribes” charged Jesus with casting out devils by “Beelzebub the prince of the devils,” also of the fact that Jesus made such a response to them as gives evidence of his divinity. The chapter ends with a record of the fact that his mother and brethren sought him, and that he declared those to be his brother, sister, and mother, who would “do the will of God.”

What may we learn by considering the facts here recorded in regard to Jesus healing the withered hand of a certain man? The meanness of sectarianism is clearly indicated here, like wise the fact that Jesus was a discerner of spirits—knew the motives of mankind—and knew how to act in view of their motives. Is religious sectism as mean now as when Jesus was on earth? Yes. It is always the same—a disgrace to every creature that bears the image of God, and a reproach to the dignity of the devil. Sectism causes those possessed of it to hate everything that is good if they cannot get the credit of it. In this respect religious sectism is meaner than the devil, for he will not hate evil because he does not receive credit for doing it. The devil seems satisfied if his work is accomplished, whether he is credited with it or not.

In view of the “surname,” which Jesus gave to James and John, what may we say of those who represent John as an effeminate specimen of a man? We may say that they ought to study the divine record concerning that apostle, also of his brother, James. See Luke 9:54. James and John showed the intenseness and severity of their nature by desiring to call fire down from heaven to consume the Samaritans because

their prejudices prevented them from receiving the Savior.

What may we learn by the record here given in regard to those who spoke of Jesus as Beelzebub? We may learn by considering the 30th verse of this record that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit consisted of charging Christ with possessing “an unclean spirit.” This explains, clearly, what the unpardonable sin is, and how it was committed. Those who were guilty of it suffered their sectism to cause them to hate the Savior so intensely that they forced their tongues to say what was contrary to their convictions. Can any one now commit that sin? No; not in the exact form that those committed it of whom we read in this record, yet in the light of Matthew 25:40 and 1 Corinthians 8:12 there is danger that it may be committed by the enemies of the Church who seem disposed to charge the teachings of the Holy Spirit to the devil. For instance, when a sectarian speaks of the Holy Spirit's teaching that “water baptism is necessary to salvation” as a “devilish doctrine” there is a sin committed which is closely related to “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.”

Is there anything special in the record here given of that which the Savior said by reason of the fact that his “mother” and his “brethren” desired to “speak with” him, and “sent unto him, calling him”? No. The record in the last of Matthew 12th chapter is about the same that we find here. Both records indicate that Jesus had brothers and sisters in the flesh. Those who deny this certainly admit that he had a mother in the flesh, and if the word “mother,” in this connection should be accepted in its natural application, then the word “brethren” should also be thus accepted.

CHAPTER IV

What is set forth for our learning in this division of the Sacred Text? The parable of the sower is first set forth, followed by its explanation. Then we find several statements in regard to light, and responsibility, also a parable concerning the sowing of seed, the growth which results from seed, and the harvest. Next we find that the kingdom of heaven, in its advancement, is illustrated by the growth of a grain of mustard seed, which is placed in the earth; and brings forth a great herb. The chapter is continued with statements concerning parables, and is ended with an account of a “storm” at sea; also of the Savior commanding the storm to cease, of the “great calm” that followed, and of the astonishment

felt; by his disciples when they saw that “even the wind and the sea” obeyed him.

What are the chief differences between the record, in Matthew 13th chapter, of

the parable of the sower, and the record here given of that parable? The 10th verse of this chapter informs us that those who were “about” the Savior, “with the twelve” Apostles, inquired of him concerning that parable, while Matthew 13:10 declares that “the disciples.” asked him, “Why speakest thou unto them in parables?” Are these records in harmony? They are. The “disciples” asked Jesus why he spoke in parables, and those “about him with the twelve” asked him to explain “the parable” of the sower.

Is there any other difference between Matthew's record, and the record here given, of this parable? There is. The 14th verse of this record informs us that Jesus said in explaining this parable, “The sower soweth the word, but this is not stated in Matthew's record.

What is taught by the parable of the sower? The Savior thereby teaches that there are four classes of hearers of the word of God, namely, those who suffer Satan to take the word from them, those who receive the word “with gladness,” but do not endure “affliction or persecution,” those who suffer “the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches,” to prevent the word from becoming fruitful, and, finally, those who “hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit” abundantly. But, as there are three degrees of fruitfulness mentioned by the Savior, he intended, also, to teach that those who hear the word, and bring forth fruit, are not all of the same ability.

What may we learn by considering the 11th and 12th verses? We may learn that the Savior spoke in parables while the multitudes were present, because his teaching was not all intended for them, and he afterwards explained his parables to his disciples. The “mystery of the kingdom of heaven” was not intended for the multitudes, but it was specially intended for “the disciples.” Matthew 13:13-15 explain the condition of mind and heart, which was in the multitude, and those scriptures indicate that those who made up the multitude were not honest, for they “closed” their eyes to the truth. Such, at least, was the condition of mind and heart in the leaders of the multitude, and they caused the masses of the people to be dishonest. Then was fulfilled the saying, “If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch.” (Matthew 15:14.) Does that same state of af-

fairs now exist? It does. The masses of mankind, in Bible lands, would, likely, become interested in the Gospel, and obey it, if they were not under the influence of sectarian teachers. But those teachers frame fallacies which they impose on the confiding masses, who, innocently, accept them, and console themselves thereby, while they remain ignorant of the Bible. In them is fulfilled the “woe” against the “scribes and Pharisees,” which the Savior pronounced in Matthew 23:13. They will not study the Bible themselves, so as to learn how to enter the kingdom of heaven, nor do they encourage others to study it. Their influence is in the direction of keeping mankind in ignorance of the Bible.

CHAPTER V

What are the facts recorded in this chapter? An account is here given of a man who was possessed of many evil spirits, and of the fact that Jesus cast out those spirits; also, that, at their request he suffered them to go into a herd of swine, which resulted in the death of the swine. Next we find an account of the disposition of the people who dwelt near where the mentioned facts occurred, of the disposition of the man who had been cleansed of evil spirits, also of that which Jesus said to him. Then we learn concerning a certain ruler whose daughter was “at the point of death,” and of a certain woman who had a “plague,” also that the woman was healed of her “plague,” and the ruler's daughter was raised to life after she had died.

What do we find, in the account here given, that is different from Matthew's record of these events? In Matthew 8:28 the record informs us that in the “country of the Gergesenes” two men possessed of devils met the Savior, while here we learn that it was in the country of the Gadarenes and that one man, possessed of devils met him. But as the Gergesenes and Gadarenes were the same people, also, as the records unite in regard to the evil spirits requesting that Jesus would “suffer” them to enter a herd of swine, and unite in regard to the results of the evil spirits entering the swine, certainly the two records refer to the same occasion. Why, then, did Matthew mention two persons, as possessed of devils, while Mark mentions only one? The 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of this chapter inform us concerning one man much more definitely than Matthew informs us concerning either of the men whom he mentions. Therefore, while Matthew makes mention of two men, and states the particulars in which they were alike, Mark's account states certain par-

particulars in regard to one man, and does not mention the other, either by an affirmation or a denial. Therefore the two records are in harmony, as may be seen by taking Matthew's record, and then adding, that one of the men "had his dwelling among the tombs," and describing him as Mark does in the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of this chapter. These records, on the question before us, present a fair example of the alleged "contradictions" which are supposed to be in the Bible. But all those who affirm that there are "contradictions" in the Bible show that they do not discriminate between what is different, or contrary, on the one hand, and what is contradictory, on the other hand. Contradictory statements exclude each other, while contrary or different statements do not, and, therefore, they admit of explanation.

Does Matthew inform us that either of the men, out of whom the Savior cast evil spirits, as mentioned in his 8th chapter, desired to follow him? He does not, and this indicates that Mark's record embraces more, in one respect, while Matthew's record embraces more in another. This is common in human history, and should not be regarded as strange in divine history.

What do we find in this chapter that is different from the record given of the same fact by Matthew? In Matthew 9:20-22 we read concerning a certain woman who "touched the hem" of the Savior's garment, but are not informed that he asked, "Who touched my clothes?" as Mark informs us. Neither does Matthew inform us that Jesus received any confession from the woman he healed.

Are the facts mentioned in the last verse of this chapter set forth by Matthew, in his record, of raising the Jewish ruler's daughter? They are not mentioned by him, and here is another evidence of an important difference between the record of Mark and that of Matthew. But the difference, in each instance, is not contradictory. It is only a difference in regard to completeness. Bible readers who consider this aright will be able to understand that they may safely deny every intimation that the Bible contradicts itself in any particular. Those who say that the Bible contradicts itself show they don't know the meaning of the word "contradiction."

CHAPTER VI

Of whom, and of what, are we informed in this chapter of Mark's record? It is a record of Jesus in regard to going to the district designated, "his own country," also of his

teaching in “the synagogue” that was there, of the astonishment which those who knew him felt, by reason of his “wisdom,” and his “works,” also a record of the fact that he was called “the carpenter,” and that he was the son of Mary, who was the mother of other children. Then we find a record of the fact that the people in Christ’s “own country” “were offended at him,” also that he spoke of being “without honor” at that place, and that he did “no mighty work” there, but “marveled” because of the “unbelief” which he found in the people there. Next we find in this record that Jesus sent forth the twelve Apostles, “two by two,” and an account is here given of what he told them when he sent them forth, also mention is made of what they did, what king Herod, and others, said of Jesus. An account is also given here of John the Baptist offending Herod, and his wife, likewise of the occasion and fact of John’s death, and of the burial of his body. Next we learn that the Apostles gathered themselves unto Jesus, and reported their words and works, likewise that Jesus then called them into , a desert place” to “rest a while.” But the record informs us that the people were so eager to be with him that they went unto him, and that he wrought a miracle to feed them before he sent them away. Next we read that he “departed into a mountain to pray,” and that his disciples, whom he had , constrained” to “get into a ship,” and go to a place named “Bethesda,” were met by a wind which was “contrary” and that he went unto them in the night, whereupon the wind “ceased.” The chapter is ended with an account of the fact that Jesus, and his disciples, entered “the land of Gennesaret,” and that he healed many afflicted persons in that land.

What is referred to in the expression “his own country,” as found in the first verse of this chapter? In Luke 4:16 we learn that reference was made to Nazareth, where he had spent much of his early life.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd verse of this chapter? We may learn that Jesus had brothers and sisters in the flesh, as certainly as that he had a mother in the flesh. if the words, “brother” and “sister,” in that verse, are not used in their ordinary meaning, then the word “mother” is not so used. Therefore, as Jesus had a fleshly mother he also had fleshly brothers and sisters. What may we say of the doctrine that the mother of our Savior never became the wife of Joseph, in a fleshly sense? It is a fancy of the apostate church, and is contrary to that which is implied in Matthew 1:25, as well as contrary to all that is said about the “brothers” and “sisters” of Jesus.

What is indicated by the 5th verse of this chapter? In chapter 9:23 we are informed that performing miracles was sometimes dependent on the faith that was exercised. (See also chapter 2:5.)

What special fact is mentioned in the record here given of the commission which Jesus gave to his twelve Apostles which is not mentioned in the record given in Matthew 10th chapter of the same event? The fact that Jesus sent them forth “two and two,” or sent two of them together.

What may we learn by considering the account here given of the death of John the Baptist? The record here given is about the same as that found in Matthew 14th chapter, and the rash swearing of king Herod suggests the propriety of the Savior's teaching in Matthew 5:33-37, against all kinds of swearing. Jehovah does not desire that his name shall be trifled with, nor that man should rashly bind himself, by an oath, so that he would feel under obligation to do a wrong deed because he had sworn to do it, nor that he should violate his oath because it was wrong for him to make it. Therefore, the Savior and one of his apostles together forbid all swearing. See Matthew 5:33-37, also James 5:12.

And what may we learn by considering the eagerness of the people to hear the Savior, and to be with him, as indicated in this chapter? The perverted masses of the people, in all generations, have been more honest than their perverting leaders. As a result, they have been, as a rule, ready to give honor to a real benefactor, and to show their appreciation of his worth. When Jesus was on earth multitudes were glad to hear him, and to follow him, because they understood that he was their friend.

And what of the miracle of feeding five thousand men, as here recorded? It is also recorded in John 6:5-13, and as there set forth it indicates divine economy, as well as divine power. Though Jesus was capable of creating an unlimited supply of food when the occasion so required, yet he did not intend that even “the fragments” of a meal, provided by a miracle, should be “lost.” This is an index to the economy which should be practiced by all of Christ's disciples.

Can we learn anything by considering the 46th verse of this chapter? Yes. It informs us that Jesus needed to pray in secret, and shows that he exemplified the doctrine that he taught in Matthew 6:6. It is also an index to our needs. We may be much occupied in public, doing good to our fellow mortals, but if we understand our needs, and would

imitate the Savior, we must not forget to resort to a secret place, and there engage in prayer.

Is there anything special in the 49th verse of this chapter, which makes mention of the fact that Christ's disciples "supposed" they had seen a "spirit"? Yes. It specially teaches that those disciples were not materialists, or soul-sleepers.

And what may we learn by studying the 52nd verse? We may learn that the disciples of our Savior were like the Israelites in the wilderness. They, considered not, or soon forgot, what the Lord had done, and, as a result they doubted in regard to that which he would do, or "were sore amazed [seriously amazed] in themselves beyond measure, and wondered," at that which he continued to do in their behalf.

What is indicated by the last part of this chapter? The Savior's power to heal seems to have been unlimited, and when he did not state how afflicted ones should approach him they were at liberty to approach him in any way that was respectful. Does this show that mankind are now at liberty to approach him, and be saved, in any way they see fit? No. In John 9th chapter we learn that Jesus gave a certain blind man special instructions, in regard to that which he should do, and that when he obeyed Jesus he received his sight. This is an index to the requirements of the Savior, in order to salvation, in the fulness of the Gospel Age. When mankind comply with them, then, and not till then, they will be saved.

CHAPTER VII

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed concerning an interview which Jesus had with "Pharisees and certain scribes," in regard to certain traditions of the Jews about washing hands before eating, also of the teaching which Jesus did on the occasion. Next we learn of the Savior's explanation of the teaching which he did on that occasion, in which he set forth a difference between bodily defilement, and defilement of the heart, in the moral, or religious, sense. Then we find a record of a certain woman, who was of a different nation from the Jews, but who showed much faith in approaching the Savior in behalf of her daughter. The chapter is ended with an account of Jesus healing "one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech," followed by a record of the fact that Jesus charged those, who were with the man he had healed, not to tell any one, and that they did not obey his charge, as they were, be

yond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

What may we say of the first part of this chapter? It is very much like the first part of Matthew's 15th chapter, and clearly shows that Jesus knew how to confute his critics. In connection with what is here taught we learn that "vain worship" consists of "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." This record also clearly shows that a part of the written word of the Old Testament is definitely declared to be "the word of God." This is an important fact which should be well considered, as there are certain errorists who declare that neither the Bible, as such, nor any part of it, is spoken of, in the Bible, as "the word of God."

Did the Savior discourage the washing of hands before eating food? No. But he objected to those who had made a part of "the word of God" of no effect, "by their traditions," measuring his disciples by those "traditions." Then he explained to his disciples that eating with "unwashed hands" would not "defile the man," because material food does not corrupt "the heart," but he taught them that mankind are "defiled" by "evil thoughts" and other evils which come from the heart.

Do "thoughts" come from the heart—the fleshly heart? Yes. Though the fleshly heart does not think, yet it is the seat of emotion—of earthward loves and hates—and, in order for the thoughts of the mind to become effective they must be sufficient to stir the emotions, so as to move the will. Thoughts and emotions are closely related to each other, and each must affect the other in order that the will of mankind may be moved in any direction.

May we learn anything by considering the faith of the Syro-Phoenician woman, of whom an account is given in this chapter? Yes. She possessed a faith, and a determination, which did not suffer her to become offended. The Savior's illustration in regard to children and dogs did not cause her to become discouraged. Neither did she consider it as an intimation that she was numbered with "dogs," and, thus, did not deserve the Savior's care. This indicates the earnestness which sinners should manifest in their desire to become Christians, and which Christians should show for the salvation of sinners. Greater earnestness should be shown in order to obtain spiritual salvation than can possibly be manifested to secure any kind of temporal benefits.

What is taught in the last of this chapter? The fact that Jesus produced the conviction in certain persons, that he did all things well, while on earth, is here set forth. And what does this indicate? It indicates that he has certainly done all things well since he left the earth, and, therefore, that the plan of salvation is complete in all its parts, and perfect in every particular. He certainly would not do “all things well” in regard to temporal affairs, but attend to spiritual affairs in an imperfect manner. Woe, then, to those who suffer themselves to think that they can improve on the plan of salvation, set forth in the Gospel! They indirectly charge the Savior with folly, by saying and doing that which implies that he was more concerned about temporal affairs while he was among men than he has been about spiritual affairs since he ascended to heaven.

CHAPTER VIII

Concerning what events are Bible readers instructed in this chapter? Instruction is here given concerning the feeding of four thousand persons, by a miraculous increase of bread and fish, in connection with which we learn of the Savior's “compassion” in behalf of the poor who were hungry. Next we are instructed with reference to an interview which Jesus had with certain “Pharisees” who desired that he would show them a “sign from heaven.” This is followed by a report of an interview between Jesus and his disciples in regard to that which he spoke of as “the leaven of the Pharisees.” Next we find an account of Jesus gradually healing a blind man, and this is followed by an account of the Savior's talk with his disciples about his divinity, after which we read of what he said concerning his death, burial, and resurrection, also of what the Apostle Peter said to Jesus on the subject, and of what Jesus said to him in response. The self-denial which would be necessary in order to follow Christ, the value of a soul, and the fact that Christ will, finally, be ashamed of those who, in this life, will be ashamed of him—these are the facts and truths which are recorded in this chapter.

Of what are we first informed in this chapter? The “compassion” of Jesus for those who had followed him “three days” without anything to eat, and the fact that he showed his “compassion” for them by, miraculously, feeding them before he dismissed them, are the facts first recorded here for our information.

What may we learn by considering the 11th, 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Christ would not work miracles to gratify the curious, and this indicates that his followers should not make speeches, nor perform acts, of any kind, to gratify the curious of mankind. Therefore, all funny talk, and all ludicrous conduct, on the part of disciples of Christ should be avoided.

And what is taught by the Savior's warning against "the leaven of the Pharisees," and all that is recorded in connection with it, in this chapter? We are taught that the first disciples of our Savior were slow to understand, their Master's teaching, and were liable to forget his power. Then by reading Luke 12:1, we learn that "the leaven of the Pharisees" was "hypocrisy." Is there any such "leaven" now in that part of the religious world which is designated "Christendom"? Yes. Judging from the conduct of many we may safely conclude that they seem much more careful to appear righteous before their fellow mortals than they are to be righteous before God.

What was unusual in the miracle wrought to heal the blind man mentioned in this chapter? The Savior, generally, made a perfect cure at once, or instantly, but, in this instance, he brought the miracle to perfection gradually. This was unusual.

Why did Jesus command the man whom he had healed of blindness to go to his house, and avoid public places, and not to tell any one of what had been done? Chapter 1:45 indicates the answer. Jesus needed to forbid many, whom he had cured of ailments, to publish what he had done for them, in order that he might go on with his work. Mankind are so desirous to be healed of their physical ailments that they are very much disposed to crowd after the one who, they think, can heal them, and then to praise the one who has healed them. But, how are they disposed in regard to their spiritual ailments? As a rule, they are not disposed to think, seriously, that they have any such ailments. If they admit the existence of them they seem to think that they are too slight to deserve serious attention. Only a few suffer themselves to be convinced that their spiritual needs are greater than those that are temporal, and that they should be more careful about those that pertain to their souls than such as pertain only to their bodies.

What is the difference between the record here given of Christ's interview with his disciples, in regard to his divinity,

and the same interview in Matthew 16th chapter? This record is much shorter than that given by Matthew, but both state the fact that Peter confessed Jesus to be the Christ, yet contradicted him in regard to what he said about his death, burial, and resurrection, likewise that Christ then spoke to Peter, and declared him to be “Satan” by reason of that contradiction. Satan contradicted God in the garden of Eden when he said to our mother Eve, “Ye shall not surely die,” and when Peter contradicted the Son of God he placed himself on the side of Satan. What does this indicate that Christ would say if he would return to earth, and find men contradicting him by saying, “He that believeth and is” not “baptized, shall be saved”; and “Ye are” not “complete in him who is head of all principality and power”? That which he said to the Apostle Peter indicates that he would speak to such men as he did to Peter, and thus would call them “Satan.”

In what application is the word “life” used in the 35th verse of the chapter now before us? It is first used in the sense of earth life, and, then, in the sense of eternal life. That verse, therefore, sets forth this idea: Whosoever will save his life [this earth-life by denying Christ] shall lose it [lose life in eternity] , but whosoever shall lose his life [by confessing Christ and suffering death on that account] the same shall save it—because he shall have eternal life.

What should we conclude from the Savior's declarations in the 36th and 37th verses? We should conclude that the soul of man is of more value than all else combined, and that we should be more diligent in regard to saving our own souls, and the souls of others, by leading them to do right, than we should be in regard to anything else during our life-time in this world. For this reason we should all be very careful in all our words and works, lest some word or act of ours may lead a soul astray, or discourage a soul that is struggling in the right way. Moreover, we should all strive to live so that those with whom we associate may be led in the way of righteousness. By so doing we shall let our “light so shine before others that they may see our good works, and glorify” our “Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16.) The Greek word translated by the word “soul” in the 36th and 37th verses is here used as in 1 Peter 1:9, and thus is used in the sense of “spirit.”

What does the last verse of this chapter set forth for our learning? The teaching here set forth should cause all, to

whom it is made known, to tremble with fear, lest they suffer themselves, at some time, to be ashamed of Christ, or, at least, of some of his words. When Christ will come “in the glory of his Father,” with the holy angels, he will be ashamed of all those who, in this life, will have been ashamed of him, and of his “words.” There are multitudes who think they would not be ashamed of the Savior if he should now appear among mankind, and preach, and work miracles, as he did when he was on earth, yet they are ashamed to confess that they believe in him, or that they desire to be numbered with his followers. What is worse, there are many of his professed followers who are ashamed of much that he taught. This is evident, when his teaching concerning water baptism, and holy living, is set forth in their hearing. In some instances, his professed followers become offended whenever the Savior's teachings, on the mentioned subjects, and several others, are set forth before them. All such misconduct, on their part, shows that they are ashamed of Christ and of his words, in that they are ashamed of such of his words as are in opposition to their sectarian notions, and their earthward desires. Of all such the Savior declares, in the verse under consideration, that he will, finally, be ashamed. This declaration should terrify all who are really ashamed of any part of his teaching, and should fill all others with fear lest, in some sense, they will feel ashamed of him or of some one of his words.

CHAPTER IX

What are the outlines of this chapter? That which the Savior here said about the time when “the kingdom of God” would “come with power,” is first stated, and this is followed by an account of his changed appearance, with Moses and Elias, on a certain mountain. Next we read in regard to an interview between Christ and his disciples about “Elias,” and this is followed by an account of certain “scribes,” questioning the “disciples,” and of Christ casting an evil spirit out of a certain man's son, after the disciples had failed, in their effort, to cast him out. Then this is followed by an account of an interview between Christ and his disciples in regard to the reason they could not cast out the mentioned evil spirit. Next we read of what the Savior said to his disciples about his death, burial, and resurrection, and of their lack of understanding, and lack of candor, in regard to that which he said on the subject. Then we read of the Savior's teaching in regard to being “greatest” in his kingdom, and what he said about receiving a little child in his name, also what he said

about being for him, and not against him, likewise the advantage of favoring his disciples, and the danger of offending one of them. Near the close of this chapter we find statements of the Savior in regard to the extreme measures which mankind should adopt in order to avoid doing wrong, and, thus, avoid being lost. The chapter ends with a few words concerning “salt,” in a spiritual sense, and a command concerning “peace.”

What is indicated in the first verse of this chapter? It indicates that , the kingdom of God , would , come with power, , before all those, who were with the Savior, at the time mentioned in this verse, would die. In view of this when did “the kingdom of God come with power”? It must have “come,” thus, on the day of Pentecost mentioned in the second chapter of Acts. The word “power,” as used in Acts 1:8, is an indication in this direction. In that verse the Savior said to his disciples, “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” The word “power,” as used in these two scriptures, Mark 9:1 and Acts 1:8, clearly shows that the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was referred to when the Savior promised that “the kingdom of God” should “come” while some, who were with him, would still be among the living on earth.

What was intended to be taught by the transfiguration of the Savior, as recorded in this chapter? We are not definitely informed, and should not speculate. Nevertheless, the fact that Moses had long been numbered with the dead, yet appeared with Elijah when the Savior was transfigured, shows that this important occasion was not intended to teach the doctrine called “materialism,” for it is in opposition to that doctrine. Besides, the fact that “a voice came out of the cloud,” which was present on that occasion, and that voice said of Christ, “This is my beloved Son; hear him,” indicates that Christ should be the supreme teacher of his disciples, and not Moses, nor Elias.

Who was the Elias referred to in the 11th, 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? Reference was made to John the Baptist, who came “in the spirit and power of Elias”; that is, he came in the spirit and power of the Elijah of the Old Testament. See Luke 1:13-17. But he was not Elijah in person. See John 1:21.

What may we learn by considering the miracle which Jesus wrought in casting out the “foul spirit,” as mentioned in the 25th verse of this chapter? We may learn that Jesus had more power than his disciples possessed, also that for want

of fasting and prayer, on their part, they were not able to perform such a miracle. But what could fasting and prayer on their part advantage them in working any kind of a miracle? Matthew 17:19, 20 indicate that, by reason of a lack of “fasting and prayer,” on their part, they lacked faith, for Jesus said to them that they could not cast out that “foul spirit” because of their “unbelief.” This indicates that the power to work miracles depended on close communion with God, as well as on special gifts divinely bestowed, and further indicates that the pretended miracle workers, in modern times, are deceivers, for they are all too ignorant of the Bible to be in close communion with God.

Why was it that Christ's disciples did not understand him when he spoke to them of his death, burial and resurrection? The only reason anywhere indicated is that they thought he was going to establish an earthly kingdom, and that they would have high positions, under him, in that kingdom. This is intimated by the fact that they “disputed among themselves, who should be greatest” in the kingdom which they supposed he would establish. The Jewish nation, generally, supposed that their promised Messiah would re-establish the Jewish kingdom, and, in so doing, overthrow all the enemies of the Jews as a people. Christ's disciples were partakers of that supposition, and, as they believed Christ to be the promised Messiah, they thought that he would establish an earthly kingdom, and make them prominent rulers under him. This mistake, on their part, prevented them from understanding what the Savior meant when he spoke to them of his death, burial and resurrection, and it beclouded their minds with reference to everything he said to them in regard to the spiritual character of his kingdom. The effect of the mentioned mistake on the minds of Christ's disciples indicates what may be the effect of any error on the minds of any others, especially a fundamental, or foundation error. Such an error tends to becloud the mental vision, of those afflicted by it, on all subjects connected with it. This is the reason that preachers of Christ, however plain they may be, are not able to make rapid progress in leading those, who are under sectarian errors, into the light of the gospel of God's grace.

What may we learn by considering the 38th verse, and that which follows, in this chapter, on the same subject? We may learn that the twelve Apostles were not the only ones whom Jesus had sent forth to cast out devils, even before he sent out the “seventy,” who are mentioned in Luke 10th chapter. But, as we are not informed who that one was whom John saw “casting out devils” we should not speculate on the

subject. May we not suppose that John saw one of the seventy? The order of events, as set forth in Luke 9th and 10th chapters, seems to forbid. In Luke 9:49, 50 we read of that one whom John saw “casting out devils,” and in Luke 10: I we read that “after these things the Lord appointed other seventy also.” We may suppose that Luke did not record these events in their exact chronological order, but such a supposition would not be in harmony with 1 Peter 4:11, which requires us to speak “as the oracles of God.”

What is implied for our learning in the Savior's answer, in regard to the one whom John saw casting out devils? The implication is that those who do what is right should not be hindered by us, even if we don't know them personally. Can this be justly applied to disciples of Christ in their relations to the sects around them? No; for all that they do in the right direction is mixed with error. Besides, with one accord they oppose us, and thus are “against us.” This shows that they are not “on our part,” for the Savior said “he that is not against us is on our part, , and this implies that all who are “against us” are not “on our part.” There are some devoted followers of Christ among the sects, but all such take their stand with true disciples of Christ whenever they learn the truth as we preach it. But a majority of those among the sects are genuine sectarians, and, generally, despise all truth that is advanced against them, and, especially, despise those who advance it. Such persons do not bear the remotest relation to the man who cast out devils in the name of Christ, but was not known to the Apostle John, for that man was doing right without any admixture of wrong.

What is taught in the 41st and 42nd verses? The teaching found in those verses is more fully indicated in Matthew 25:40, 45, which declare that the Savior regards all good and all evil deeds, done to his disciples, as done unto himself.

What is indicated by the Savior's teaching in the 43rd verse, and onward to the end of the 48th? The indication is that mankind should suffer the loss of the most highly esteemed member of their bodies rather than to stain their souls with sin. For instance, if a man should become convinced that the power of his right hand would cause him to sin, in fighting those who offend him, he would better cut that hand off than for him to have it, and be sent to hell on account of the sins it would cause him to commit.

But does the Savior here teach that if a man loses a member of his body by accident, or disease, that such member will be lacking in his spiritual body which will be given him in

the resurrection? No. That is not implied, nor intimated, in that which is here stated. But the intimation is that any member which would need to be severed from a

person's body in order to prevent that person from being sent to hell will be lacking in the resurrection body. But even this idea is only intimated, and not clearly implied, for the entire case is only suppositional.

But may not the Savior have used the definite suppositions, or hypotheses, that are recorded in the last of this chapter to set forth the importance of mankind separating from any, and from all, associates who would lead them into sin? Yes, that may have been all that he intended to teach by the mentioned suppositions.

But what may we say of the punishment that is here mentioned? It is certainly eternal punishment. This is indicated by the three-fold statement,—“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

What should we say to those who teach that this three-fold statement, as found in the 44th, 46th and 48th verses, was intended, by the Savior, as a reference to the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem where carcasses of dead animals were burned, and where the worms fed on parts that were not consumed by fire? We should say to them that such an idea is wholly fanciful, and is beneath the dignity of rational beings. Certainly it is without the slightest intimation in its favor, either in the Bible or in the domain of reason. Those who advocate such an idea should be required, in the most positive manner, to give evidence in its favor that is worthy of the thought of rational beings, and if they fail to do so they should be denounced as visionists, and as perverters of truth, who are destitute of ordinary respect for the sacredness of divine testimony, and the importance of right religion.

What is taught in the 49th verse? As literal “salt” has power to correct, and to preserve, it is here used to illustrate the doctrine of punishment with “fire.” That doctrine was divinely intended to correct mankind, and to preserve them. This is indicated in Matthew 25:41, 46, also in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. The expression “salted with fire” therefore means, turned from wrong, and kept from wrong, by the doctrine of everlasting punishment in fire. Leviticus 2:13 declares that every sacrifice offered to God should be seasoned with salt, and Christ here teaches that every person who is saved from actual sin shall be saved by the doctrine of punishment in fire. The love of God should be the chief motive, or moving power, in leading mankind to turn from sin, but

the true preachers of Christ need to let sinners know that if they will not obey God, by reason of his love for them, he will certainly give them a place in the fire “prepared for the devil and his angels.” That fire was not prepared for mankind, but “for the devil and his angels.” See Matthew 25:41. Yet all those of mankind who turn from the love of God, manifested in their behalf, and will follow the example of the devil and his angels, must be cast into that fire.

CHAPTER X

Of what may we learn by giving attention to this chapter? We may learn of the fact that many persons continued to resort unto the Savior, and that he continued to teach them, likewise that certain Pharisees questioned him in regard to divorce, and that he answered them, also his disciples, then, questioned him on the same subject, and that he answered them. Next we learn that certain persons “brought young children to him, that he should touch them,” and that he “blessed them,” and also that a certain young man, who was rich, came to the Savior “and kneeled to him,” and inquired what he should do to “inherit eternal life,” after which we find a record of the Savior's answer to him, and remarks made concerning those who “trust in riches.” An account is then given in this chapter of the Apostle Peter's inquiry about that which he and his fellow Apostles should receive, and of the Savior's answer. This is followed by an account of Jesus, and his disciples, going up to Jerusalem, also of how they felt, and what he said would “happen unto him.” A record is then given of the apostles, James and John, making a certain request of Jesus, and of his answer to them, also of the effect of their request on the other Apostles, followed by the remarks which Jesus made to all of them on that occasion. The chapter is ended with an account of the fact that Jesus restored sight to a certain blind man.

What is the chief difference between the record of Christ's teaching concerning divorce, in this chapter, and in the 19th chapter of Matthew's record? Matthew 19:9 makes mention of “fornication,” as the only reason for a divorce which is scriptural. But both records clearly indicate the sacredness, and closeness, of the marriage relation.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the Savior's words concerning little children, and of the fact that “he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them”? We may learn that childhood

was sacred in the Savior's sight, while he was on earth, and we may justly conclude that the same is yet true.

What is the chief difference between the record given in this chapter, and that given in Matthew 19th chapter, and Luke 13th chapter, of a certain rich young man, who approached the Savior with a request concerning "eternal life"? In the 17th verse of this chapter we learn that the mentioned young man "kneeled" to the Savior, in the 21st verse we learn that "Jesus beholding him loved him," and in the 24th verse we find the expression "trust in riches." All of these facts are absent from the records given by Matthew and Luke.

Do these several differences in the records, as here recorded, assist us in our efforts to understand the Savior's teaching in regard to the mentioned rich young man? Yes, especially the difference indicated by the words—"they that trust in riches." That difference clearly indicates that only those rich men who "trust in riches" Will find it impossible to enter the kingdom of heaven, even as it would be impossible "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

What is indicated by Peter's question in regard to that which he, and his fellow Apostles, should receive for the losses they had suffered by following the Savior? That Peter had the idea that he, and other Apostles, should have a definite agreement, or special contract, is thereby indicated. But the Savior only gave him a general idea of what they should receive, and then made a brief statement of what all others, who would suffer self-denials, on his account, should receive. Besides, by the parable of the householder, as recorded in Matthew 20th chapter, he endeavored to teach Peter that he should not wish to serve, in the kingdom of heaven, on a special contract. This is indicated by the fact that the special contract laborers, as mentioned in that parable, were not satisfied with their reward, while those who served, on a general promise, were satisfied. Nor is this all. For the same parable sets forth the fact that those who were the first to consider the question of reward were the last that were rewarded, and received least, in view of the time they had labored, whereas those who seemed not to think, specially of definite reward, were the first to be rewarded, and were rewarded more liberally than the others, considering the shortness of time they had labored. Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be. In proportion as preachers of Christ think, and talk, about the reward they should receive those who are really Christians will be slow to reward them, and in proportion as they serve the best interests of their fellow

mortals, those who are really Christians will be prompt to reward them. At the same time, those who are not really Christians will be slow to reward preachers for their labors in proportion as they seem indifferent on that subject. But the conclusions just expressed do not apply to those who are not really Christians, and who show it by giving least to the man who serves without a contract, and will only pay when they agree to pay a man who demands a contract.

What may we, as readers of this record, learn by considering the account here given of James and John? We may learn that they desired high positions for themselves, by which they showed a common disposition in mankind. But the Savior's answer to them informs us that they did not know what they were asking, and that the highest position in his sight consists of being "servant of all."

To what did the Savior refer, by the words "cup," and "baptism," in the 38th and 39th verses? By those words he referred to his own sufferings and death. This is evident by the use made of the word "cup" in Matthew 26:29. Socrates was required to drink the deadly hemlock from a cup, and by a figure of speech drinking of a cup was here spoken of with reference to death. Moreover, the word "baptize," in its most general signification, means "to overwhelm," and the Savior knew that he could not die till he would be overwhelmed by his sufferings. *Therefore he spoke of his death as a "baptism," and the fact that he used the word "baptism" with reference to his death, shows that the word baptism is not fulfilled in a sprinkling, nor in a slight pouring, for it means "to overwhelm." The Savior was not slightly sprinkled upon, nor slightly poured upon, when he was crucified, but he was overwhelmed by his sufferings, and for that reason he spoke of those sufferings as a "baptism."

Is there anything of special instruction, in the account given, in the last of this chapter, concerning the healing of a certain blind man? Yes. The Savior was "with his disciples and a great multitude of people," yet he stopped, and commanded the blind man to be called, and asked him what he desired. When the blind man told him that he desired to receive his sight, the Savior healed him, and he became one of the Savior's followers. This shows that Jesus was not so much occupied with the multitude that he would not give attention to a blind beggar, and it indicates, in the light of Hebrews 13:8, that he is not now so occupied that he will not give attention to any one who will call on him aright.

In regard to the blind beggar whom Jesus healed we may say that, even in his physical blindness, he was fortunate, for he knew what ailed him. There are millions in spiritual blindness who do not know what ails them. Moreover, that blind beggar desired to be healed, but millions who are spiritually blind desire to remain blind.

CHAPTER XI

Of what special events are we informed in this chapter? Christ's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem is the first event of which we are here informed, then of the fact that he cursed a certain fig tree. Next we are informed of the fact that Christ cleansed the temple of those who had made it a house of merchandise, and a "den of thieves." This is followed by a record of the fact that "the scribes and chief priests" "sought how they might destroy him." Then we are informed of certain remarks which the Savior made concerning faith and prayer, and forgiveness. The chapter is ended with a record of an interview between Jesus and certain "chief priests and scribes and elders" in regard to his "authority."

What is the chief difference between the record given in this chapter of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and that given in Matthew 21st chapter? Matthew quotes the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9, in regard to that event, and makes mention of Jesus riding two beasts of burden, as a special sign of him as Zion's King, while Mark does not quote the prophecy, and only mentions one beast of burden, possibly the one on which he sat while his feet were over on the other animal. Should these different statements be called "contradictions"? No. They are simply different statements, and the most that can be justly said of them is that they are "contrary" statements. But contrary statements always admit of explanation, while contradictory statements do not. If Mark had said that Jesus rode one ass, and not two, he would have contradicted Matthew, but as one is a part of two there is not a contradiction here. For instance, in the 5th chapter of this record we read of "a man with an unclean spirit" who met Jesus, but in Matthew 8:28 we read of "two possessed with devils", and the connection shows that reference was made to the same occasion. Because one of those men spoke for the other, or was the chief speaker, or for some other reason Mark mentioned one of them, but as he did not say that there was only one man, of the kind he described, therefore he did not contradict Mat-

thew's record. The same is true in regard to the number of asses that Jesus rode into Jerusalem. Matthew mentions two, but Mark mentions only one, yet Mark does not contradict Matthew, for if Jesus rode on two assos he certainly rode one.

Why did Jesus curse a certain fig tree because it was without fruit? We are not informed, and should not speculate. Yet we should consider that by cursing that fig tree so that it soon “dried up from the roots,” he showed his power to curse. His miracles, generally, were blessings, and he thereby showed his power to bless. But by cursing a certain fig tree he showed his power to curse, and he thereby indicated what it will mean for him to say to the wicked, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matthew 25:41.)

What bearing on us has the fact that Jesus cleansed the temple of those who had turned it into a house of merchandise, and even into a “den of thieves”? It should teach us that Christians should not transact any unlawful business in themselves, personally, nor in the assembly of the saints. The Jewish tabernacle was named “house of God” (Judges 18:31), and so was the temple. See 2 Chronicles 5:14. Then 1 Timothy 3:15 informs us that the Church, as consisting of living men and women, is “the house of God.” This being true, the cleansing of the temple indicates that Christians should keep their minds and hearts pure from unlawful business, and, thus, should keep themselves unspotted from the world. What should we say to those who speak of the Jewish tabernacle, and temple, as types of church houses, or places of worship? We should say to them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.”

What may we say of the disposition to “destroy” Jesus, as mentioned in the 18th verse? It indicated what is now manifest in religious sectarians. Just in proportion as mankind are under the influence of sectarianism they despise those who differ from them, and despise all success which is made in advocating the truth, and in opposing error.

What application to us has the 24th verse of this chapter? It should be considered in the light of 1 John 5:14, which declares, “If we ask anything according to his will he heareth us.” We need to consider God's will, more than our own desires, when we pray.

And what may we learn by considering the 25th verse? it shows that the Savior sanctioned standing in time of prayer.

But as the Holy Spirit did not reproduce or re-enact what is here said, about standing in time of prayer, does it certainly apply to us who live in the fulness of the Gospel

Age? We might ask the same question about the Savior's plan for settling personal offenses, as recorded in Matthew 18th chapter, and concerning many other items of Christ's teaching which certainly apply to us. The Holy Spirit did not need, through the Apostles, to repeat, or re-enact anything that Christ taught in order to make it binding on us. But all that he taught is binding on us, if it did not refer to the Jewish law, on the one hand, and did not belong entirely to his personal ministry, and was not set aside by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles, on the other hand. Christ is our teacher, and all that he taught, in course of his personal ministry, applies to us if it did not have a backward bearing on the law, or was not entirely fulfilled in the period that he spent on earth. For instance, the doctrine taught in the 26th verse did not refer to the law, but it was annulled by the new principle of forgiveness set forth in Ephesians 4:32. That doctrine, as taught in this chapter, required disciples to forgive in order that they might be forgiven, but Paul taught disciples to forgive because they had been forgiven. This is one reason we should not use the prayer commonly called "the Lord's prayer." It taught disciples to pray, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," but Paul says that we should forgive others as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. Here is a clear case, in which certain teaching that Christ gave, in course of his personal ministry, is not applicable to us who live in the fulness of the Gospel Age, because it is set aside by other teaching which Christ gave by the Holy Spirit through an apostle. This discrimination needs to be kept in mind by all Bible readers. Because religious teachers do not generally understand this they often misapply, or ignore, much of the Savior's teaching.

What may we learn by studying the Savior's response to those who questioned him concerning his "authority"? We may learn that he was always superior to his questioners, and knew how to confuse them when he understood that they were dishonest. We may also learn that it is our privilege to question those who question us, or answer their question by asking that which involves the answer which we should give them. A preacher of Christ is sometimes approached by a curious questioner, and, instead of responding to his inquiries, the preacher will do well to ask, "Who are you; and why do you question me?" He may do well to ask, "What effect will my answer have on you if I answer your

question correctly?" By adopting this course the curious questioner often draws back, and the preacher is relieved of the annoyance of his curious inquiries. The Savior set an example in this direction when he questioned those who inquired of him concerning his "authority."

CHAPTER XII

What are the chief subjects set forth in this chapter? The conduct of the Jewish nation toward God, as illustrated, in a parable of a vineyard, is first set forth, then an account is given of an interview which the Savior had with "certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians," in regard to paying taxes, to the Roman government, which, at that time, had the Jews under tribute. Next we read of an interview which the Savior had with certain "Sadducees" in regard to the resurrection of the dead. Then we learn of an interview which the Savior had with a certain "scribe," who questioned him in regard to "the first," or most important, "commandment," and this is followed by certain questions, and remarks, of the Savior in regard to himself as the son of David, and yet as David's Lord. The Savior then expressed a warning against "the scribes" who delighted in prominence, and were hypocrites. The chapter is ended with an account of a certain "poor widow," and what the Savior said of her.

Why did the Jews, who heard the parable, recorded in the first part of this chapter, think that it was against them? We are not definitely informed, but may conclude that they knew of the history of their nation, and that their fathers had mistreated many of the Lord's prophets. Besides, they knew of their evil purposes concerning Christ, who professed himself to be the Son of God.

Did Jesus ever indicate that he was confused by the questions of his enemies? No. But he seemed always calm in manner, clear, searching, and conclusive, in speech. His words, and his bearing, as well as his works, indicate that he is what he professed to be the Son of God in the high and pre-eminent sense, namely, "the only begotten Son."

What was the chief difference between the Pharisees and the Sadducees? Acts 23:8 informs us that the difference between them was in regard to angels, spirits, and the resurrection.

What classes of religious persons, now in existence, most closely resemble the ancient Sadducees? Those who are materialists—commonly designated as "soul-sleepers." Though

materialists do not deny the resurrection, yet most of them regard the resurrection of

the wicked as a sham, for they teach that the wicked will be raised, and then blotted out of all existence. But the condemnation which the Savior pronounced against the ancient materialists, and the evidence which he gave in favor of the conscious existence of man's spirit, separate from the body, together show that all modern materialists are under his condemnation. Luke 20:38 should be remembered by every Bible reader. The Savior declared that "all live" unto God; even those who are numbered with the dead, are only dead to us, for they "live unto him" who is called God. This proves the conscious existence of those whose bodies are in the grave, and all who deny this are numbered with those who contradict God, and, therefore, are on the side of Satan. See Genesis 3:4; Matthew 16:22, 23. These scriptures indicate that if Jesus should now speak to them directly he would certainly condemn them. They are less excusable than the ancient Sadducees were, because they have all that the New Testament records against those Sadducees.

Why is it that the command to love God with all the heart is designated "the first commandment"? In Matthew 22:36-40 we learn that the expressions "great commandment of the law," and "first and great commandment," are used, and from these we learn that the word "first" is here used in the sense of importance—"first" in importance, or greatness, is the idea.

What is indicated by the Savior's statement, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God," as used by him to a certain "scribe"? It indicates that when a man approached the Savior, sincerely, he was favorably received. The man to whom the Savior thus spoke was a "scribe," but he was not of the critical kind. The Savior knew his heart, and answered him clearly and approvingly.

What is the best evidence which can now be given by persons that they are "not far from the kingdom of God"? For them to be sincere inquirers after truth, is the best evidence. Will such inquirers become offended when the truth is made known to them—even truth that condemns them in some of their practices? They will not.

What is meant by the expression "devour widows' houses," which is used with reference to a certain class of scribes? They were hypocrites, and would do as certain covetous persons now do—they would be exacting even towards widows, and would sell their houses whenever the law would suffer

them to do so. Those of the ancient “scribes,” who did so, “shall receive greater condemnation,” and we may safely conclude that the same will be true of those who are now guilty of such unmerciful conduct toward widows.

What may we learn by considering the record given, in the close of this chapter, of a certain widow, who placed in the “treasury,” “all that she had”? We may learn that heaven estimates according to ability, and not according to the amount that is given, nor the amount that is accomplished, as mankind estimates. Man inquires, “How much have you done?” or, “How much can you do?” But heaven inquires, “What is your ability?” And heaven rewards according to faithfulness, and not according to the amount accomplished.

What may we say of those widows who put a small portion of their income into the Lord's treasury, and say that they have given “the widow's mite”? We may say to them that they ought not to class themselves with the widow who gave “all she had,” and that the Lord does not require them to give that much. He only requires them to give as they are prospered.

CHAPTER XIII

Of what do we read in this chapter? The Savior's prophecy, in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the end of the world, is here recorded. In connection with this prophecy is found the Savior's instruction to his disciples in regard to their departure from Jerusalem before it would be destroyed, and the importance of Christians being always ready for his second coming.

What is the chief difference between the record here given of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, and that given by Matthew? The record as given by Matthew is somewhat more detailed. Besides, Matthew 24:29 says, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened,” while Mark says, in the 24th verse of the chapter before us, “But in those days after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened.” This testimony of Mark shows that the word “immediately,” as used by Matthew, should be accepted in a modified sense. This is of much importance in studying the 24th chapter of Matthew.

What may we learn by considering the 11th verse of the chapter now before us? We may learn that Christ intended that his chosen ones should be verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit. They were specially commanded not to take “thought,” nor

to “premeditate,” what they should say when they should be brought “before rulers and kings” “for a testimony against them.” In view of this what should we say to those who declare that the inspired men needed to choose their own words in expressing the ideas which the Holy Spirit gave to them? We should say to them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.”

What is meant by the expression “elect's sake,” as recorded in the 20th verse? It means what it says, for it refers to the elect whom God had “chosen,” and thus refers to those who had become God's elect according to the Gospel. The Apostle Peter makes mention of such in his first letter, first chapter, and second verse.

Who are meant by the “false Christs” mentioned in the 22nd verse of this chapter? Those are meant who would pretend to be the Messiah between the time that he spoke and the destruction of Jerusalem.

How can we harmonize the 30th verse with the idea that a part of it refers to the destruction which shall come in the close of the Gospel Age? We can harmonize this verse with that idea by considering the difference between that which is meant by the expression, “these things,” and that which is meant by the expression, “those days after that tribulation.” The expressions “these things,” and “that tribulation,” refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, but “those days,” which would come “after that tribulation,” refer to the period which will come to pass in the last days. The generation, living at the time Christ uttered the prophecies recorded in this chapter, did not pass away till all that was meant by the expression “these things” did come to pass in the tribulation connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. But many of the events which will come to pass in “those days after that tribulation,” have not yet transpired.

And what of the 32nd verse? It reveals that the time, when the final tribulations will come on this earth was not definitely known to the Savior when he prophesied concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world.

What bearing on Christians has the command to “watch,” as recorded in the last of this chapter? It warns all Christians to be ready for the second coming of the Lord, and this implies that they should strive to be always ready for death, because as death finds them so the second coming of the Lord will find them. Moreover, as the second coming of the Lord will find them so they will be in the ages of eternity.

CHAPTER XIV

What events are recorded in this chapter? Certain events which occurred shortly before the betrayal of our Savior into the hands of his enemies, certain events connected with his betrayal, and several which occurred after his betrayal, are here recorded.

What special difference is in the record here given, of the anointing of our Savior's body by a certain woman, and that given by Matthew? Matthew makes mention of the "precious ointment" that was used, and records that "the disciples" said it "might have been sold for much," while Mark records the exact sum, namely, "three hundred pence." Are these records of that event contradictory? No. They are different, but not contradictory. The disciples may have said that the ointment which that woman used might have been sold for much, even three hundred pence. Then Matthew may have been impressed with the general statement, while Mark may have been impressed, by the Spirit, with the definite sum. Then, when the Holy Spirit was given to "teach" them "all things" and "to bring all things" to their "remembrance", he inspired Matthew to recall what he had been impressed with, and gave to Mark what he should record. Do the variations found in the Gospel records indicate that the authors of those records were not definitely and verbally inspired? No. The Savior did not promise the Spirit to cause his witnesses to become machines, but to bring all things to their "remembrance whatsoever he had said unto" them, and this implies an accurate remembrance of all that was connected with his words and works. Thus it was with the Apostles who were witnesses of those words and works. But the inspired evangelists—Mark and Luke—were told of those words and works by those who were actual witnesses of them. See Luke 1:1-4. And then, as their style indicates, the Holy Spirit guided them to write what was true..

Has the prophecy set forth in the 9th verse of this chapter been fulfilled? It has, and here is another proof of the divinity of its Author.

In view of the testimony found in this chapter, also in Matthew 26th chapter, and Luke 22nd chapter, in regard to "the passover," what should we say to those who deny that Jesus ate the Jewish passover, but suppose that he ate a new meal, and who call that supposed new meal "the Lord's supper"? All who thus deny, and thus suppose, adopt a method of treating the Sacred Text, which will make infidels of them if they will apply it to all parts of the Bible. Three of the New

Testament writers made mention of “the passover” about a dozen times, and if they did not mean the regular Jewish passover, then not one of the New Testament writers can be believed on any subject of which he has written.

What does the word “eat,” refer to, as found in the 22nd verse? In the first part of that verse it refers to eating the Jewish passover, but in the last of that verse it refers to eating of the bread of the “communion,” commonly called “the Lord's supper.” Should the communion of bread and fruit of the vine be called “the Lord's supper”? Yes, and for the special reason that there is not another institution worthy of being thus designated. Besides, in I Corinthians 10:16, 21, we find that when the “communion” is spoken of, and defined, “the bread” is spoken of, also “the cup,” and the cup is even spoken of as “the cup of the Lord,” likewise the table used on the occasion of attending to the “communion” is called “the Lord's table.” Then the conclusion is unavoidable that the bread and the fruit of the vine, when placed on “the Lord's table,” is the Lord's supper.

What is referred to in the 25th verse? We are not definitely informed, and should not speculate. Whether the Savior referred to a spiritual meeting with his people in the communion, or that in the everlasting kingdom this institution will be continued, we are not informed, and we should not try to be wise above what is written.

What may we conclude from Peter's statement that he would not be “offended because” of Christ, and would “die” with Christ before he would deny him? He gave evidence of being impulsive, and impulsive men are not, generally, very brave, when their tempers are not stirred, or when they are seriously tried. We may likewise conclude that Peter did not know himself at the time mentioned in this chapter. What he said should be a warning to us against making use of rash expressions. We all need to be severely tried in order to know ourselves.

What is indicated in the 35th and 36th verses? The Savior's attitude, or posture, in time of his prayer in the garden of Gethsemane is first indicated, and then the burden of his prayer. Should Christians prostrate themselves when they pray? Yes, when their distress of mind is great, and suggests that posture. But suppose some one should now affirm that all praying should be done while the body is prostrated on the earth, even as the Savior's body was when he prayed in Gethsemane? Such an affirmation would be like unto that which certain ones make in favor of kneeling in the public

assembly, because Paul, and others, knelt on a certain occasion mentioned in Acts 20:36. Posture of body, in time of prayer, is left by our Savior, as an open question, to be decided by the spirit of worshipers, and by their circumstances.

May Christians pray as the Savior did in Gethsemane? Yes, whenever they are in distress because of some evil, that is likely to come upon them, they may pray for deliverance as the Savior did, when he prayed against death, and yet said to his Father: "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt." Such a prayer is in harmony with I John 5:14, and when we thus pray the Holy Spirit is an intercessor for us before Christ, and then Christ intercedes for us before the Father. See Romans 8:26; Hebrews 7:25.

What may we say of those who teach that in Gethsemane Jesus prayed because he feared that he would die there, and would not live till he could be crucified? We may say that such teaching is strictly fanciful. Besides it is contrary to chapter 10:38, 39. In those scriptures the word "cup" is twice used with reference to Christ's death, and in the 33rd and 34th verses of that chapter he declared that he should be condemned by the Jews, be delivered to the Gentiles, and die by those hands of the Gentiles. Then in John 12:32, 33 the Savior signified that he should die on the cross. All this, and much more, that he said, forbids the conclusion that he was afraid of dying in the garden of Gethsemane. Such a conclusion implies that our Savior was a weakling, because it implies that he so feared death that he was afraid he might die, contrary to what he had previously said of his death! Therefore such a conclusion should be regarded as unworthy of serious consideration, except to be refuted, and refused.

What did the Savior refer to when he said, "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak," as recorded in the 38th verse? The connection indicates that reference was made to those disciples who slept while he prayed. He apologized for them by saying, "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

What may we say of the style of speech which we find in the 41st and 42nd verses? The style there found is perfectly natural in view of the circumstances, though we need not suppose that the events therein mentioned occurred as rapidly, nor that the Savior spoke of them, as rapidly, as they appear to us in printed form.

Of what special value to us is the record found in the 61st and 62nd verses? The 62nd verse, taken in connection with the 61st, sets forth the plainest answer which the Savior gave, while he was on trial, in regard to his divinity.

What is implied by the statement, “Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto,” as found in the last of the 70th verse? The implication is that Peter’s style of speech indicated that he was of that district of Palestine which was named Galilee.

CHAPTER XV

Of what important events are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor in Jerusalem, at that time; also of the clamor of the Jews against Jesus, of the sentence that was given against him, of his crucifixion, and of the burial of his body.

At what time was Jesus nailed to the cross? The 25th verse informs us that it was “the third hour of the day,” or about nine o’clock in the morning. Then in the 33rd verse we learn that three hours later there began to be “darkness over the whole land,” which was continued “until the ninth hour.” This informs us that the body of Jesus was nailed to a Roman cross at nine o’clock in the morning, and hung there till twelve o’clock in the day, before the darkness came, and then, at midday, “darkness” came “over the whole land,” which continued till three o’clock in the evening, at which time Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the spirit.

What is indicated by the accusation “The King of the Jews” which was placed “over,” or above, Jesus, when he was crucified? It indicates that he was, then, “the king of the Jews,” and the fact that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, all recorded that “accusation,” without comment, clearly implies that it was endorsed by the Holy Spirit, who brought all things to their “remembrance,” and guided them “into all truth.”

What may we learn by considering the 42nd verse? By considering it in the light of John 14:19 we may learn that the “sabbath” here mentioned was the first day of the “passover” which was a day of “rest,” and thus was a “sabbath.” Therefore the word “preparation” in this verse referred to the preparation which was made for the “passover,” and not the “preparation” which was made for the regular weekly sabbath. Now we are prepared to understand John 19:31, which speaks of that particular “sabbath” as a “high day,” and this implies that it was not the weekly sabbath, but was the first day of the “passover,” which was a day of rest, and, therefore, was a sabbath day,

for the word “sabbath” means “rest.” See Exodus 12:16. This implies that Jesus was crucified on the day before the passover, which was a sabbath, and as he was raised the first day of the week, which was the first day after the weekly sabbath was ended, therefore he was crucified, and his body was buried, on the day that is commonly called Thursday. It was in the tomb a part of Thursday, and all of Thursday night, all of Friday, and all of Friday night, likewise all of Saturday and all of Saturday night. This conclusion is in harmony with Matthew 12:40, which informs us of the Savior's declaration that his body should be “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” The conclusion just mentioned is the only one that is in harmony with that declaration, and, therefore, is the only one that should be accepted.

CHAPTER XVI

What are the outlines of this chapter—the last of Mark's record of the Gospel? This chapter sets forth that certain women, early in the morning of the first day of the week, went to the tomb where the body of Jesus had been laid, also that they failed to find the body, but were told by one who was there that Jesus had arisen from the dead. It also sets forth that those women were commanded to tell the disciples of Jesus where they should go in order to see him. Next we are informed that Jesus appeared to two of his disciples, then unto the entire number of his chosen ones then living, and gave them his world-wide commission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, after which he ascended to heaven. The chapter is ended with the statement that those chosen ones went forth and preached, also that their preaching was confirmed with “signs.”

How can we harmonize the first verse of this chapter with John 20:1, as this verse mentions several women, and that verse only mentions one woman? The harmony is easily understood when we consider that John does not deny that others besides Mary Magdalene went to the sepulcher. He mentions her only, and the reason is evident as we consider what he afterwards sets forth concerning her.

But how can we harmonize the expression—“at the rising of the sun”—in this verse, and the expression— “when it was yet dark”—as found in the first verse of the 20th chapter of John? The harmony becomes easy when we consider that the word here translated “sun,” in certain connections, means “light” “daylight.” Therefore we may say “at the rising of” daylight, “when it was yet dark.” All who have eyes to see

can observe this condition, in regard to light and darkness, any morning that they will arise early enough to see the daylight arising in the east while darkness is yet about them.

Who was “the young man,” mentioned in the 5th verse of this chapter? Matthew 28:2-7 inform us that he was an angel, and in John 20:11, 12 we learn that “two angels” were afterwards seen at the sepulcher.

What are the differences between the world-wide commission of our Savior, as here recorded, and as we find it in the last chapter of Matthew's record? Matthew declares that Jesus said, “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations,” while Mark declares that he said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” But these records are in harmony. To “teach all nations” the Gospel, and to preach the Gospel to every creature, or all mankind, certainly embrace the same. Besides, the word translated “teach,” in Matthew 28:19, means “make disciples of,” and thus means, cause them to become believers. With this before our minds we can understand how the command to “teach,” followed by the command, “baptizing them,” is equal to the command, “preach the gospel,” followed by mention of “believeth and is baptized.”

In view of the conditions of salvation, set forth in the 16th verse, what may we say to those who teach that baptism is not necessary to salvation? “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God, is a saying of our Savior which we may apply to them. We may apply also what is set forth in Matthew 23:13, for those who declare that baptism is not necessary to salvation neither enter the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer others to enter it if they can prevent them. In the light of John 3:5, water baptism is necessary to enter “the kingdom of God.”

But what, shall we say to those who declare that the baptism mentioned, in the verse before us, for consideration, refers to Holy Spirit baptism and not to water baptism? We should say that Holy Spirit baptism was a promise to be received, and not a command to be obeyed. As a promise it was intended for a special class, and not for all believers. The special evidence of it was the gift of tongues, or the power to speak languages which had never been learned. But that sign was divinely intended to cease. See 1 Corinthians 13:8. Therefore it is erroneous to say that baptism, as a condition of salvation, means Holy Spirit baptism.

Is it not a contradiction of the Savior to say that baptism is not necessary to the salvation of an alien sinner? It certain

ly is. Jesus said. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” but those who deny the necessity of baptism, say, by implication, “He that believeth, and is” not

“baptized shall be saved.” But this implication contradicts the Savior, even as Peter contradicted him when he said that he should not die, and those guilty of such an offense deserve the name that Peter received. See Matthew 16:22, 23. Satan contradicted God when he said to our mother Eve that she should “not surely die.” See Genesis 3:4. Peter placed himself on Satan's side when he said to the Son of God that he should “not” die, and the same is true of those who preach that baptism is “not” necessary to salvation.

Is not repentance necessary in order to salvation? Yes, and it is mentioned in Luke 24:47. As repentance is necessary, but is not mentioned in Mark's record of the world-wide commission, we can see the necessity of taking all the scriptures that bear on any subject.

Why did not the Savior mention baptism when he spoke on the condemnation side of the commission before us? Baptism does not belong to that side, neither does repentance, nor faith, belong there. But unbelief pertains to that side, and those who do not believe will be condemned without regard to baptism. This is clearly taught in John 3:18, which declares, “He that believeth not is condemned already.” In view of this it was unnecessary for the Savior to say, He that is not baptized shall be condemned, even as it was unnecessary for him to say, He that does not repent shall be condemned. The world-wide commission of our Savior has a salvation side, and a condemnation side, and those who wish to be saved should take their position on the salvation side of that commission, but should avoid the condemnation side.

What may we say of the promise, “And these signs shall follow them that believe”? We may say that this promise was literally fulfilled. The signs here mentioned did follow those who then believed, and they accompanied those who became believers under their personal instruction. In other words, those “signs” attended the ministry of the Apostles, as is declared in the last verse of this chapter.

What should our response be to those who assert that the “signs,” here mentioned, were intended to follow all who would become true believers, even down to the close of time? We should say that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” One of the “signs,” that the Savior here mentioned, was “new tongues,” and in 1 Corinthians 13:8 Paul defin-

itely declared, "Whether there be tongues they shall cease," even as the special gifts of "prophecies" and of special "knowledge" should cease. In the light of what Paul declared, in the verse just referred to, those who teach, that the "signs" mentioned by our Savior in his world-wide commission should not cease, show that they know not all that is revealed on this subject. They likewise show that in their ignorance they contradict the Apostle Paul on this subject. The same is true in regard to those who assert that there is not now a true believer on earth because there is not now even one who can work miracles. All such asserters show ignorance of the Sacred Text, and, in many instances, their behavior is such as to suggest the idea that they are "willingly ignorant." See 2 Peter 3:5.

Was the world-wide commission, which we have been considering, given to any persons except the Apostles? It was not. On the contrary, it was confined to the eleven Apostles till Matthias was chosen. See Acts 1:26. Then it was confined to the twelve Apostles till Paul was chosen. After that it was confined to the thirteen Apostles, and with them it still remains. They united in their work, and the New Testament is the document which sets forth their teaching. In this document they still live, officially, though they have been dead, personally, nearly two thousand years. The idea that the Apostles are dead, officially, because they are dead, personally, and that, therefore, we should have successors of the Apostles, is the fundamental error of the apostasy. Besides, the idea that preachers of Christ are now under the Savior's world-wide commission, is another fundamental error. That commission was intended for the Apostles, and abides with them. Therefore the Savior said to them, "lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." See Matthew 28:20.

But some one may inquire, Under what commission do preachers of Christ now proclaim the Gospel? The answer is, Under the commission that Paul gave to Timothy, when he charged him to "preach the Word." See 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

Having examined Mark's record of the Gospel, what may we say of it? Was Mark inspired? Yes. Why may we so affirm? His style indicates it. Uninspired men cannot write in the concise, dignified, comprehensive style of those who were inspired by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. This is evident to any one who will read the apocryphal books connected with the Old Testament, or those connected with the New. Those books show the best imitation that has ever been made of the style of inspired writers, and they seem but poor

imitations when they are closely examined. Take the first and last chapters of Mark's record as illustrations of his style, and the evidence of his inspiration is overwhelming. Take even the first and last sentences of his record, and the same conclusion is unavoidable. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

These are not the declarations of an uninspired mortal, nor the words of one who was unaided by power from on high. Those who will read the Old Testament through, and then begin the apocryphal books—the books of hidden, or spurious, authorship—will feel as if they have fallen from some lofty height to a domain of low grounds. In other words, they will feel that they have descended from the company of men of might and magnificence to the company of common mortals, when they will begin to read the apocryphal writings. The same experience will result to all who will read the New Testament through and then will begin the books which were rejected as spurious when persecution was inaugurated against the Sacred Writings. On this principle we may safely say that those who question the genuineness, or authenticity, of any part of the volume commonly designated "The Bible," show that they do not understand what is set forth in that volume, nor do they appreciate its style of communication.

LUKE

CHAPTER I

What may we learn by reading this chapter—the first of Luke's record of the Gospel? We may learn that Luke gave a report of events which he had heard from others, and that those events were the birth of John the Baptist, preceded by an account of John's parents, and followed by mention of the mother of Jesus, and the promise which an angel made to her, also by a record of the speech which John's mother made before his birth, and the speech which the mother of Jesus made before his birth. Then we find a record of the speech which John's father made after his son had been born and named. The chapter is ended with a brief mention of John.

Was the writer of this record of the Gospel an Apostle? No. In Colossians 4:14 Paul makes mention of him as “the beloved physician,” and in 2 Timothy 4:11 he again mentions him as the “only” one who was, at that time, with him. Then in Philemon Paul mentions him as his “fellow-laborer.”

Did he write any of the New Testament documents besides the record now before us? Yes. The fact that the book named “Acts of the Apostles” was addressed to a man named , Theophilus, , and a document designated, “The former treatise,” is referred to in the first sentence of Acts, are indications that the record of the Gospel now before us, and the book of Acts, were both written by the same writer. In view of this we may conclude that Luke was one of Paul's traveling companions, and was with him on his journey, as a prisoner, to Rome. See Acts 27th and 28th chapters.

As Luke was not an Apostle, what evidence have we that he was inspired, and, therefore, wrote with divine accuracy? The fact that the seven men, mentioned in Acts 6th chapter, as chosen to serve the church at Jerusalem in temporal things, were inspired, and the fact that the twelve men mentioned in Acts 19th chapter became inspired when Paul laid his hands on them, also the fact that the church at Corinth consisted largely if not wholly of inspired persons (I Corinthians 12th chapter)—these facts indicate that many, if not all, of the men, in the New Testament Church were, in some measure, specially inspired. This implies that Luke was inspired, like-

wise Mark. Those two writers—Mark and Luke—were not numbered with the Apostles, but they were co-workers, or "fellow-laborers," with them, and, as inspired men, they became correct reporters of events which they learned from others. Besides, Luke may be justly regarded as a witness of much that is set forth in the Book of Acts.

Is there any other evidence of the inspiration of Mark and Luke? Yes. Their style indicates that they were inspired. For instance, the record given in the chapter before us of the speech of the angel Gabriel to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, also of what that same angel said to Mary in regard to the Son she should bear, give evidence of inspiration. Then, the record of the speech which Elizabeth, John's mother, made when she visited Mary, and of Mary's speech, on that occasion, very strikingly indicate special inspiration. The same is true of the speech of Zacharias after John had been circumcised. Those speeches were not recorded at the time each of them was uttered, and could not have been recalled by any one of those who uttered them, except by inspiration. Therefore, in order to record them Luke must have been specially inspired. They were inspired speeches when uttered, and were recorded by inspiration. This is indicated by their dignity and excellence, and grandeur, both in thought, and in its expression.

Who was Theophilus, whose name is mentioned in the 3rd verse of this chapter? We are not informed. His name means "lover of God," but we are not informed who he was.

What may we learn by considering the 6th verse of this chapter? A clear definition of what is meant by the expression, "righteous before God," is here set forth for our learning. Luke here informs us that it means, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." This should be remembered, and seriously considered, by all who desire to be saved.

What should we say to those who refer to the 9th verse of this chapter to show where the altar of incense was in the tabernacle? We should inform them that the temple was not in all respects patterned after the tabernacle, and that Paul knew God's arrangement in the tabernacle. Therefore, what he said about the place of "the golden censer," or "golden altar of incense," as the "American Revised Version" informs us, should settle the question of its exact position in the tabernacle. See Hebrews 9:3, 4.

What may we say of the speech which Zacharias made to Gabriel, as it is recorded in the 18th verse? It was the result of a lack of faith on his part. He should have believed what God's angel said to him regardless of earthly prospects, even as Abraham did when God promised him a son in his old age. See Romans 4:19-21.

What is revealed in the 36th verse of this chapter? The fleshly relation of Jesus to John the Baptist, is therein revealed. And what should we say to those who, on the basis of this verse, try to deny that Mary was of the tribe of Judah, as this verse informs us that she was a cousin to Elizabeth who was of the tribe of Levi? We should inform them that the Jews, who opposed the Savior, knew of Mary's parentage, and if she had not been of the tribe of Judah, and, thus, a descendant of David, who was of that tribe, they would have gladly used it against Jesus in their controversies with him in regard to his Messiahship. But their silence on that subject should silence all others with reference to it.

What should we conclude from the last verse of this chapter? Our conclusion should be that it is an illustration of the difference between God's ways and man's ways, in regard to the record of a great man's early life. In one brief sentence the early life of John the Baptist is set forth, though he was one of the greatest men that ever lived. This is very different from man's ways in making a record of the early life of great men.

CHAPTER II

Of what events do we read in this chapter? We read of the taxing which required Joseph, and the mother of Jesus, to go up from Nazareth where they lived, to Bethlehem, then of the birth of Jesus, of the report of his birth made to certain shepherds by an angel of God, of what those shepherds did, and the impression which their report of what they had seen made on others. The fact that the mother of Jesus "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart," is next recorded, then a record of the fact that the shepherds "returned," and how they felt toward the Lord "for all the things that they had heard and seen." Next we find a record of the circumcision of Jesus, according to the Jewish law, and that his name was then called "Jesus," and of the legal "purification" of his mother according to the law concerning a mother. A record is then given of an aged man named Simeon, also of an aged woman named Anna, who was a "prophetess," and this is followed by mention of Joseph

and Mary, with Jesus, returning to Nazareth. Brief mention is then made of the child Jesus, also of Joseph and Mary, in regard to their observance of the Jewish law, of what Jesus did at Jerusalem when he was about twelve years of age, and of the fact that he went with Joseph and Mary to Nazareth, and became "subject unto them." The chapter ends with brief mention of Jesus in regard to his increase "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

In what sense should the word "world" be taken, as used in the first verse of this chapter? It should be taken in a restricted sense, as it referred only to the Roman Empire. Though the word here translated "world" means "the habitable earth," yet it is "used with various restrictions of meaning according to the context."

What may we conclude from the fact that Jesus was born at a time when his mother and foster-father had to seek shelter in a stable? As the divine Father could have arranged otherwise we are impelled to conclude that he intended to rebuke all pride in regard to birth, and to comfort all lowliness in regard to birth. In the entire history of man's redemption the lowly birth of our Savior seems most wonderful, especially when considered in the light of a father's natural desire concerning the circumstances attending the birth of his child. A true father will always be careful that his child's entrance into this world may be in the midst of the most favorable circumstances, and those fathers who are poor often lament that they cannot make better provision for the birth of their children than they are able to make. But the Creator of the universe, who has ever had all circumstances under his control, arranged for his "only begotten and well beloved Son" to be born in a stable and cradled in a manger!!! This is wonderful beyond all expression, and should serve as a rebuke of all pride, and as a comfort to all lowliness, among all mankind.

What is indicated in the 34th verse of this chapter? The "fall" of the Jewish nation by reason of its rejection of Christ, and its rising again when that nation will accept him, seem to be here indicated. See Romans 11th chapter, especially the 11th, 12th and 15th verses.

And what is indicated by the 35th verse? That which the mother of Jesus should suffer when he would be put to death, is here indicated, and the fact that his death would be necessary in order to reveal the thoughts of the hearts of many, even all who would by reason of his death become penitent, and would acknowledge themselves as sinners in need of him as their Savior. Just in proportion as sinners consider the

death of Christ for them do they acknowledge themselves to be sinners, become penitent, and turn from their sins.

What may we conclude by considering the 40th and 52nd verses of this chapter together? We may conclude, and should conclude, that the divine Father did not intend that anything should be recorded concerning his Son to gratify the curious. Therefore the Holy Spirit did not inspire Luke to write even one event of the private life of the child Jesus. The two verses declare of him that he "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him," then that he "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." That Luke wrote thus concerning the child-life of Jesus, but did not give an intimation of any special word or act of his private life, indicates his inspiration as a writer, and sets forth what all parents should be chiefly interested in concerning their children. They should desire for their children to grow, and become strong in spirit, also to be filled with wisdom, and for the favor of God to be upon them. Then they should desire for them to increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the fact that Jesus when about twelve years of age suffered his mother and foster-father to go homeward "a day's journey," while he tarried at Jerusalem? We may learn that Jesus was, generally, so obedient that he did not need watching, and that his "Father's business" was of chief importance to him at that time, also that he afterwards became "subject" to his earthly parents. Then the fact that Jesus felt that he "must" be about his "Father's business," when he was "twelve years old" intimates that the age of "twelve years" is the average age when children should be about their divine "Father's business," and, therefore, that they should then consider the importance of obeying the Gospel. Some children know enough to obey at an earlier age, while others need to be older before they can seriously consider their spiritual welfare. But the age of "twelve years" may be justly regarded as the average age when children should be about their divine Father's business. Some children know enough to obey the Gospel before they are of that age, others need to be taught longer before they will understand their duty, or feel their responsibility. When children know enough to be afraid to die without obedience to the Gospel, then they should obey it.

CHAPTER III

What is here recorded for the instruction of Bible readers? We are first confronted with a record of the names of certain rulers in the Roman government, for, at that time, heathen Rome had control of the land of Palestine. Then we read of the preaching of John the Baptist, and of the fact that he was imprisoned by Herod, the ruler of Galilee. Next we read of the baptism of Jesus, also that the Holy Spirit descended upon him, as soon as he was baptized, and that he was then publicly declared to be the Son of God. The remainder of this chapter sets forth a record of the earthly ancestry of Jesus.

What is the meaning of the word "tetrarch," as found in the first verse of this chapter? It means the ruler of a fourth part of a province, or country regarded as a province, and was sometimes applied to other rulers.

What may Bible readers learn by considering the third verse of this chapter? They may learn, and should learn, not to speak of water baptism as if it is not necessary to salvation. The baptism which John the Baptist preached, and practiced, was certainly water baptism. See the 16th verse of this chapter. Yet it is here declared to have been "the baptism of repentance" and "for the remission of sins." In other words, it was "the baptism" which pertained to "repentance," or was a part of the repentance, or turning from sin, which John the Baptist preached. Besides, it is declared to have been "for the remission of sins," or, according to other translations, it was "unto" or "into" "the remission of sins." But whatever may be regarded as the best translation, yet the fact remains that it was preached and practiced by John the Baptist before he gave the assurance of remission of sins. In Acts 2:38 the same doctrine was preached by the Apostle Peter as an inspired man. Many have tried to break the force of that command and promise, as declared by the Apostle Peter, but, as Bible readers, we are required to deal with the same doctrine here in the chapter now before us; also in Mark 1:4. Nor is this all. In chapter 7:29, 30 we learn that those who refused to submit to John's baptism "rejected the counsel of God against themselves." This should decide, in every mind, that submission to the divine will in water baptism is essential to salvation in the divine sight, and that all who disregard it certainly reject "the counsel of God against themselves."

What may we say of the 4th and 5th verses of this chapter? They are figurative declarations of Isaiah in regard to John,

as a forerunner of Jesus, or as a herald, to prepare a people for him. The idea of paths being made "straight," of valleys being "filled," of mountains and hills being "brought low," crooked places being made "straight," and rough ways "made smooth"—such an idea, or picture, in regard to the earth's surface, was regarded by the Lord as an appropriate condition in the material world to indicate the changes which the preaching of John the Baptist should make in those who would hear him.

Why did John speak of "the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him," as a "generation of vipers"? Matthew 3:7 indicates that he had reference to the "Pharisees and Sadducees," when he made mention of "vipers." John the Baptist was an inspired man, and he knew the character of the "Pharisees and Sadducees," and their history indicates that they were justly designated a "generation of vipers," because in disposition, they were like unto "vipers."

What may we learn by considering the moral bearing of John's preaching? It was all good. He commanded those who heard him to bring forth fruits "worthy of repentance." Then he commanded all to show charity toward the poor, and the publicans, or tax gatherers, to avoid exacting more than was required by law, and the soldiers not to do "violence" to any man, not to "accuse any falsely," and to be "content" with their "wages." Such teaching was all good, and an illustration of the moral teaching of the entire New Covenant scriptures.

What is meant by the word "fire," as recorded in the last of the 16th verse? It means the same that is meant in the last of the 9th verse; also in the last of the 17th verse. In both of those verses the word "fire" is used with reference to an element, or power, of destruction. This indicates that, in the last of the 16th verse, it means the same. John the Baptist addressed a mixed multitude, consisting of those who were sincere, and those who were not sincere. The sincere ones would remain faithful till the day of Pentecost, mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter, and then they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, the insincere ones would not be faithful, and, as a result, will be numbered with those to whom the Savior will finally say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25:41.)

What is taught in the 17th verse! That verse sets forth in an illustration what is taught concerning the final judgment in Matthew 25:31-46, In that verse the final separation of the

good from the bad, of mankind, is indicated; also the reward that will be bestowed on the good, and the punishment which will be inflicted on the wicked. As a man, in ancient times, used a fan, or winnowing shovel, to separate the chaff from the wheat, so the Lord will finally separate the evil from the good, and as a man gathered his wheat into his granary, or "garner," so the Lord will gather his faithful ones to himself. Finally, as a man burned the chaff, so the Lord will cast the wicked into everlasting fire.

Does this verse teach that the wicked will be annihilated, or entirely blotted out of all existence? No. The illustration used does not justify such a conclusion, for that which is burned is not annihilated, though it is changed in form. The elements, even in chaff, cannot be blotted out of all existence by fire, though the form of those elements may be changed by fire. Besides, there is a material called "asbestos," which fire cannot change in form. It is not destructible, by fire, even in regard to form, and this indicates what may be true of the wicked. Though they will be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, yet there is not the slightest indication that they will be annihilated, or blotted out of all existence. On the contrary, Revelation 22:11 informs us that the "unjust" and the "filthy" will forever remain in those conditions, even as the "righteous" and the "holy" will forever remain in those conditions.

What should we say to those who endeavor to set aside the New Testament teaching in regard to marriage and divorce, by referring to the 19th verse of this chapter, which makes mention of Herod having "his brother Philip's wife"? We should remind them that at the time when John reprovved Herod for that offense the Jewish law was in force, and that law permitted a man to have two, or more, wives; also that in course of the authority of that law, a woman was spoken of as a man's wife, even after he was dead. See I Samuel 27:3; 2 Samuel 2:2. Therefore the 19th verse of this chapter, should not be used in an effort to break the force of I Corinthians 6:16.

What may we learn by reading the 22nd verse of this chapter? We may learn that the Holy Spirit assumed the "bodily shape" of a dove when he descended on Jesus; also that Jesus was publicly declared to be the "beloved Son" of God after his baptism, but not before. This suggests the inquiry whether God has since then acknowledged any one as his adopted son, or daughter, before obedience in baptism, and even such baptism as Jesus submitted to when John baptized him "in the

river of Jordan." See Mark 1:5, 9. Those who teach that water baptism is not necessary in order to become a child of God, do so at their peril. The New Testament sets forth a different doctrine, for it teaches that in the case of those who have never become Christians water baptism is necessary. See Mark 16:16. Though unbelief is sufficient to insure condemnation, yet belief and baptism are necessary to insure salvation. Other scriptures teach that repentance of sins, and confession of faith, are also necessary to salvation. But those who have already been baptized are required to "repent . . . and pray" in order to be saved when they sin. See Acts 8:22.

How can we explain the difference between Luke's record of the earthly ancestry of Jesus, and the record which Matthew gives of his ancestry? The explanation is all found in the fact that Luke traced his ancestry backward to that son of David whose name was Nathan, while Matthew traced his ancestry forward from that son of David whose name was Solomon. In the book named Ruth we find an illustration of a family coming together that had long been separated. David's grandfather, Obed, was a son of Ruth, who was a Moabitess, and the Moabites descended from Lot, who was a nephew of Abraham, and, therefore, a grandson of Abraham's father. Therefore, the family of Terah, Abram's father, separated in Lot and Isaac, who were cousins. Lot became the father of the Moabites, and Isaac became the father of the Israelites. Thus it was that those two families originated and separated; yet by the marriage of Boaz, an Israelite, to Ruth, a Moabitess, those two families came together again. See Genesis 19:30-38; Ruth 4:18-22.

Is there any contradiction between Matthew's record of the earthly ancestry of Jesus, and the record here given by Luke? No. Contradictory records exclude each other, by declaring that the other is not correct. But different records and even contrary records do not exclude each other, and therefore admit of harmonious explanation. For instance, Matthew declares that a man named "Jacob" was the father of Joseph, who became the husband of Mary, while Luke declares that the name of Joseph's father was "Heli." But Joseph's father might have been named Jacob Heli. Besides, Heli may only have been Joseph's step-father, or, perhaps, only his father-in-law. Such an explanation is reasonable, and will be accepted by all who are governed by reason rather than by technicalities.

If Luke had not been inspired by the Holy Spirit, or had been

a copyist, would he have written the genealogy of Jesus as it is here given? No. He would not have ventured to differ from Matthew's record in any particular. Therefore, the bold difference from Matthew, which Luke's record indicates, shows that he must have been guided by the Holy Spirit.

But why did the Lord suffer the Holy Spirit to inspire men to write records so different that multitudes become confused in studying them? We are not definitely informed in the Bible, yet, judging from results, we may safely conclude that the Lord caused these two records to differ in order that those who are not wholehearted in their desire to be saved might flicker and flounder, and blunder, and be lost, while gratifying their technical disposition in criticising the mentioned records. The Bible is not written for the purpose of providing against dishonest minds, but it is so written that those who are honestly disposed for eternal life may learn their duty and be saved. At the same time it is so written that all others will find something in it to criticize and be lost. See Matthew 13:10-15.

CHAPTER IV

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are first informed of the fact that Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness, that he was then hungry, and was tempted by Satan to turn a stone into bread, then was tempted to worship Satan, and then to cast himself down from the temple. We are likewise informed that Jesus met the temptation of Satan by quoting from his Father's book. Next we are informed that Jesus entered the city called Nazareth, that he went in a synagogue there, and read a prophecy concerning himself, after which he explained it to the people, and told them in regard to a prophet being without honor in his own country, and illustrated it by reference to a fact in the history of Elijah, also by a fact in the history of Elisha. This is followed by an account of the impression which his preaching made on those in the mentioned synagogue, and that he left Nazareth and went to Capernaum, where he cleansed a man who was possessed of an evil spirit, and thereby astonished the people who beheld that manifestation of his power. Near the close of the chapter we find an account of Jesus healing the mother of Simon Peter's wife, and healing many others of various diseases, and casting out devils, after which he proposed to go into other cities. The chapter ends with the statement that "he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

What are the special differences between the record here given of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, and that given by Matthew? In the 3rd verse Luke informs us that the devil proposed to Jesus that he should turn what he designated "this stone" into bread, while Matthew records that Satan spoke of "these stones," which implies more than one stone. Besides, Matthew mentions the temptation in regard to "the pinnacle of the temple" second, and the temptation in regard to "the kingdoms of the world" third, but Luke reverses this order. Are these differences contradictions? No. They are only discrepancies, and may be satisfactorily explained

What should we say to those who teach that Jesus was reared in Egypt, or Syria, or in any other country outside of Palestine? We should inform them that such an idea is contrary to all testimony concerning Christ, especially the 16th verse of this chapter, which informs us that he was "brought up" in Nazareth.

What is the bearing of the Savior's teaching in regard to a prophet not receiving honor in his own country? Its bearing is, that because his own people would not appreciate his works, therefore, he would go to others, even as Elijah and Elisha did.

What is indicated by the unclean spirit mentioned in this chapter, saying, "Let us alone"? The common disposition of wrong doers, of all kinds, is thereby indicated. With one accord they wish to be "let alone," or permitted to do their evil deeds undisturbed.

What conclusion is evident from the fact that evil spirits knew the Savior and declared that he was "Christ, the Son of God"? We must conclude that they knew more than the Jews, generally, knew, and even more than was clear to the disciples at that time. From this we may also conclude that the devil is a supernatural being, and knows more than man does, especially in regard to the spirit world.

CHAPTER V

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter of Luke's record? We may learn concerning Jesus in regard to his preaching in a boat on "the lake of Gennesaret," of the success which Peter made when he put down his net into the sea at the Savior's command, and of the effect of that success on the mind of Peter and others. Then we learn in regard to Christ cleansing a leper, and directing him to observe

the Jewish law in regard to his cleansing, after which we learn that many others were cleansed of their infirmities. Next we read that Jesus went into the wilderness to pray, also that afterwards he again exercised his healing power among the people. The cleansing of the palsied man is next recorded, also that he pronounced the palsied man's sins forgiven before he healed him, and sent him to his own house after cleansing him. Next we are informed of the calling of Levi, the publican, or tax-gatherer, then of the fact that Levi made a feast for Jesus, and had a "great company of publicans and others" there, and that because Jesus sat down to eat with them certain "scribes and Pharisees" criticized his disciples because they did "eat and drink with publicans and sinners. The answer which Jesus gave to his critics, on that occasion, is next recorded, and then his, answer to those who inquired of him why his disciples did not fast, even as did the disciples of John the Baptist, and the disciples of the Pharisees. The chapter is ended with certain parables which Jesus spoke in order to teach that his doctrine should not be mixed with anything else, but should be kept separated, especially from human customs.

Why did Simon Peter speak of himself as "a sinful man," and request the Savior to "depart" from him? The context indicates that he felt ashamed of himself because of what he had said when the Savior told him to let down his net for a draught, or haul, of fish. Because he had fished "all the night," and had "taken nothing," he thought that it would be in vain for him to let the net down, yet he would do so because the Savior commanded him. What should we learn from all this? We should learn that we should obey the Savior at all times, regardless of earthly prospects, and without doubting.

What may we learn by considering the 14th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the Jewish law was in force when Jesus cleansed the leper mentioned in this chapter. This is evident from the fact that Jesus commanded that leper, after he had been actually cleansed, to go, and show himself to the priest, and offer for his legal cleansing that which Moses had commanded. See Leviticus 14th chapter.

Was the Jewish law in force during all of Christ's personal ministry on earth? It was. Matthew 23:1, 2 give some evidence in this direction. Moreover, the fact that in Acts first chapter the casting of a lot was resorted to, in the choosing of Matthias, indicates that the Jewish law was in force, even till the Holy Spirit was sent down on the day of Pentecost mentioned in the second chapter of Acts. The casting of lots

was according to the Jewish law. See Leviticus 16:8; Numbers 26:55; Proverbs 16:33.

What evidence did the men who brought the palsied man before the Savior, as mentioned in this chapter, give of their faith? They showed their faith by that which they did. They manifested great earnestness in behalf of the palsied man. And what should we learn by such earnestness? It indicates that Christians should be filled with earnestness in behalf of all who are in sin. We should do all that we can to lead them to the Savior so that he may heal them by forgiving their sins.

What is indicated by the 22nd verse of this chapter? We may conclude from what is here stated that Jesus was a mind reader, and could even understand the inmost thoughts of mankind before they were expressed. And is not the same true of him now? Revelation 2:23 so indicates, for he is therein declared to be the one "who searcheth the reins and hearts." The same is indicated in Hebrews 4:13, which declares that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." What effect should these declarations have on all who become acquainted with them? They should impel us to watch over our thoughts and emotions with utmost care, so that we may avoid entertaining any idea or feeling which is contrary to the divine will.

What is indicated by the 31st and 32nd verses? The Savior expressed, what is set forth in those verses, as a defense against the criticisms of those who censured his disciples for eating and drinking "with publicans and sinners." The idea that he presented was that those publicans and sinners needed him and his disciples, even as sick persons need a physician.

Of what are we informed in the 34th and 35th verses? They inform us concerning an ancient custom at marriage feasts. While the bridegroom was present the time for feasting was at hand, but, when he would leave, then the time for fasting would be at hand. And to this custom the Savior referred to justify his disciples in eating and drinking while he was present with them.

What is indicated by the 36th and 37th verses? Those verses set forth, in two parables, the importance of keeping new things and old things separated. By those parables the Savior showed that the custom of fasting, as practiced by the disciples of John the Baptist, and of the Pharisees, should not be imposed on his disciples. They were under his train-

ing, and for them to adopt those old customs would be like putting new cloth on an old garment, and new wine into old bottles. As the bottles that were then used were made of leather, they were not fit to hold new wine.

And what is the bearing of the last verse in this chapter? Its bearing is against mixing things new and things old.

What effect should all this teaching against mixing things new and old have on Bible readers? It should cause them to avoid mixing the gospel of Christ and the Jewish law together. Galatians 5:1-4 has a severe warning in the same direction.

Have religious persons, generally, been careful in regard to keeping the Old Testament and the New clearly separated? No. Every church, except the Church of Christ, goes to the Old Testament for authority, or sanction, in regard to one or more items of doctrine or practice. That "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes," as is declared in Romans 10:4, seems not to be understood by any church except the Church of Christ. Churches that are not mentioned in the Bible, with one accord, seem disposed to ignore, in one or more respects, the difference between the Old Testament and the New. As a result they seem to be in confusion concerning the authority of Christ, and the teaching of the New Covenant Scriptures.

CHAPTER VI

What is recorded in this chapter for Bible readers to learn? A record is here given of Jesus and his disciples going through fields of grain, on a certain sabbath day, also of a criticism that was offered by "certain of the Pharisees," followed by the Savior's answer to that criticism. Next we are informed in regard to Jesus healing a certain man on the sabbath, and of its effect on certain "scribes and Pharisees." Then we read an account of Jesus calling and naming his Apostles, after which we read of great multitudes gathering themselves unto Jesus in order "to be healed of their diseases." The remainder of the chapter sets forth a part of Christ's sermon on the mount, as recorded in Matthew 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters, with a few statements not recorded by Matthew.

What is meant by the expression—"the second sabbath after the first"—as recorded in the first part of the first verse of this chapter? We are not definitely informed, but are left to conclude that Luke referred to the second sabbath after the one he mentioned in chapter 4:16.

What may we learn by considering the Savior's defense against those who criticized his disciples for pulling ears of grain and eating the grain on the sabbath, when they were hungry? We may learn that the needs of his disciples, at that time, were of more importance than a technical interpretation of the law concerning the Jewish sabbath.

And what is taught by that which the Savior said to justify himself in healing, on another sabbath, a man who had a withered hand? The welfare of a man, who was afflicted, was of more importance than a technical observance of the sabbath.

And why were our Savior's critics "filled with madness" against him, as mentioned in the 11th verse? The connection indicates that they were mad because he had judged their thoughts, and confuted them, before he healed the man whose hand was withered, and, as a result, they were not able to bring an accusation against him.

Are the woes pronounced in the 24th, 25th, and 26th verses of this chapter, set forth in Matthew's record of the Savior's sermon on the mount? They are not. Neither is a part of the 38th verse in Matthew's record of that sermon, nor elsewhere in the New Testament. Then the 39th verse is, in another form, set forth in Matthew 15:14, and the 40th verse is partly set forth in Matthew 10:24.

What may we say of this chapter, especially of the record here given of the sermon on the mount? It clearly indicates that Luke was not a witness of what he declared, but was a reporter of what he had heard, even as he stated in the 2nd and 3rd verses of his first chapter. But, as we previously learned, Luke gives evidence that he was an inspired reporter.

CHAPTER VII

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter of Luke's record of the earth-life of our Savior? We are first informed that Christ entered the city of Capernaum, and that he was there entreated to heal a certain centurion's servant, likewise that he complied with the mentioned entreaty, and commented on that centurion's faith. Next we are informed in regard to the Savior raising a certain widow's son, and in regard to the answer that he sent to John the Baptist's inquiry of him with reference to whether he was the one that should come. Then we find a record of what the Savior said concerning John the Baptist, and this is followed by mention of those who obeyed God in John's baptism, and the

value of that baptism. A record is then given of a parable whereby the Savior illustrated the men of that generation. The remainder of the chapter informs us in regard to the fact that the Savior was invited to the house of a certain Pharisee to dine, that he accepted the invitation, and of certain events, with reference to a certain woman, while he was in the house of that Pharisee.

What is the chief difference between the record here given of Christ's healing the centurion's servant, and that given in Matthew 8th chapter? Matthew states that the centurion approached the Savior, while Luke states that "he sent unto him the elders of the Jews," and that he afterward said to Jesus, "Neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee." Are these records contradictory? No. They are only different statements of the same event. That which a man does through others he is responsible for, and thus may be charged to him. This being true we can understand that, as the centurion sent certain men to Jesus, Matthew could justly say that he "came unto him"; that is, he approached Jesus through those whom he sent to him.

What is indicated by the miracle which Jesus wrought in raising to life the son of the widow of Nain? His divine power is indicated. Raising a dead man to life, by calling on him to arise, proves that the one who does it is possessed of divine power, or, at least, that his words are used as a medium through which divine power is manifested.

Why did John the Baptist inquire of Jesus, whether he was the one that should come? We are not definitely informed, but should be thankful for the answer which was sent to John. Those who suppose that John was in doubt concerning Christ seem to have a low conception of John's character, while those who suppose that he inquired, whether Jesus was the one who should come, in order to obtain a response which would benefit his disciples, seem more respectful toward John.

To whom did Jesus refer by the expression, "least in the kingdom of God," as recorded in the last of the 28th verse of this chapter? We can understand what is meant by this expression if we consider the Savior's own explanation of what it means to be great in the kingdom of God. (Matthew 18:1-4; 23:11; Mark 9:34; Luke 9:46-48.) These scriptures clearly indicate that greatness in the kingdom of God consists of serving the best interests of others, especially the best interests of the disciples of Christ, and this implies that serving in the least capacity and degree in the kingdom of God

makes persons "great" in that kingdom. How, then, is "the least in the kingdom of God" greater than John the Baptist? We are not explicitly informed, but are impelled to conclude that as John was to finish his work before the kingdom of God should be established, therefore, he would never enter this kingdom, and, as a result, would never be as great as the least servant in this kingdom. This becomes more evident when we consider I Peter 2:9, which sets forth the glorious character of those who are in the kingdom of God, which consists of the New Testament Church.

What may we say of the value of water baptism, as indicated in the 29th and 30th verses of this chapter? Those verses set forth the value of water baptism with sufficient clearness and emphasis to condemn every one who teaches that it is not necessary to the salvation of alien sinners, or, in any respect, speaks of it indifferently, or refuses to admit that alien sinners should submit to it. For, if the baptism which John preached was of such importance that those who refused to submit to it "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," the conclusion is unavoidable that those, also, who refuse the baptism which Christ commanded to be submitted to, in the name of the Godhead, certainly reject "the counsel of God against themselves." This being true, certainly all those who reject the water baptism, which Christ commanded, are under condemnation.

What is the force of the parable here recorded concerning children in the market place? The force of it is that as such children censured others for not conforming to certain of their arrangements, so the people of that generation censured John the Baptist and Jesus for not conforming to certain of their arrangements. Is that illustration still appropriate? It is. The New Testament Church, wherever established, is censured because it does not conform to certain human arrangements. The same is often true of individual Christians. They are complained against, objected to, and censured, because they will not conform to the worldly affairs that are adopted by churches not mentioned in the Bible.

What may we learn by considering the account given in the last of this chapter concerning a certain woman who showed much love for the Savior? We may learn that she loved him much because she had been forgiven much, and that all who deny that sins were actually "forgiven," before Christ died, are not in harmony with the words of our Savior on that subject. Is the doctrine here taught, opposed to Hebrews 10:3, in any measure or degree? No. Why do any persons try to

think that Hebrews 10:3 conflicts with the doctrine that sins were actually forgiven before Christ died? Simply because they do not consider that remission of sins, before Christ died, was offered in view of his death, and that the word "remembrance" in Hebrews 10:3 'does not mean that sins were not forgiven, or could not be forgiven. Moreover, as a result of a failure to consider all this some one imagined that all sins under the Patriarchal and Jewish ages were "rolled forward," and that imaginary doctrine has been accepted by many. And those who have accepted that doctrine seem so disposed to cling to it that they will, indirectly, charge Christ with falsehood in order to maintain it."Her sins which are many are forgiven." "Thy sins are forgiven." Thus it is written, and thus it remains. The unauthorized doctrine—"sins rolled forward"should be discarded with all other human doctrines in religion, and relegated to the domain of oblivion.

CHAPTER VIII

What is here recorded? Mention of the preaching which Jesus did, mention of the twelve Apostles, and of certain women, who were with Jesus, also an account of the parable of the sower, we find here recorded. This is followed by remarks concerning a candle to give light, and of secret things being brought to light, and a warning to take heed in regard to hearing. Next we find an account of the mother and brethren of Jesus desiring to see him, and of what he said in regard to those who "hear the word of God, and do it" being his "mother" and "brethren." His voyage in a ship, the fact that he stilled a tempest and calmed the raging waters, we next find recorded. This is followed by a record of Jesus healing a maniac, who was possessed with devils, also a record of what Jesus suffered those devils to do, and the effect thereof. Next we read of the Savior raising a certain ruler's daughter to life after she was declared to be dead. In connection with the record of Jesus going to the mentioned ruler's house is an account of a certain woman who Was healed of an ailment by touching "the border of his garment."

What is the difference between the parable of the sower as here recorded, and as recorded by Matthew? Luke's record of it is, in certain particulars, plainer to the ordinary reader than is Matthew's record thereof.

What may we learn by considering the 16th, 17th, and 18th verses of this chapter? We may learn that as all things—even secret things—shall be brought to light, therefore, we should

all be careful about that which we hear. But what is taught in the declaration, "Whosoever hath to him shall be given, and whosoever hath not from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have"? That is a common doctrine among mankind, and is constantly exemplified. Proverbs 14:6 declares, "Knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth." On this principle the affairs of this life are controlled. He that hath diligence and economy, to him shall be given money; but he that hath not these excellencies, from him shall be taken even that which he has, or seems to have. Again: He that hath honesty of mind and heart shall be able to understand the Scriptures, but he that lacks such honesty will, in course of time, become confused in regard to that which he now understands. On the same principle, to those who hear the truth will be imparted information which will prepare them for more truth, while those who hear falsehood will be confused in regard to the information which they already have.

In what sense do those who "hear the word of God and do it" become the "mother" and "brethren" of our Savior? Matthew 25:41 informs us that whatever is done to the spiritual "brethren" of Jesus he regards as done unto himself, and on this principle we can understand that he regards all who do his Father's will as his relatives. Hebrews 2:11, 12 set forth more in that direction.

What is the bearing of the inquiry, "Where is your faith?" as recorded in the 25th verse of this chapter? In the preceding verse we learn that the disciples awoke the Savior, in the midst of the storm then raging, and said, "Master, master, we perish." That expression of their fear showed that they lacked faith in Christ, and in God's care for them.

What is the chief difference between the record here given of the maniac, who was possessed of evil spirits, that were cast out and went into swine, and the record given of that man in Matthew's account of the Gospel? Matthew 8:28 mentions two men of that sort, while Luke mentions only one. Do these records contradict each other? No. If there were two men of that kind, there certainly was one, and as one of the "two" of whom Matthew wrote may have been chief, or worse than the other, Luke, as well as Mark, mentions only one of them.

What is indicated in the 37th verse of this chapter? A common weakness in mankind is here indicated. The Gadarenes desired Jesus to depart from them, and thus desired their best friend to leave them. Multitudes of others have acted on the

same principle. They have, in many instances, despised their best friends, and have loved their worst enemies. But all such misconduct is the result of ignorance. Those who are guilty of it do not know their friends, and don't know who are their enemies. Thus it has been, thus it is, and thus it will be.

But what may we say of those mentioned in the 40th verse of this chapter? They were numbered with the few who knew that Jesus was their best friend. Therefore, they "gladly received him." The same is true now. In proportion as mankind are fully convinced that Jesus is their best friend they gladly receive him. See Acts 2:41.

What may we learn by considering the miracles, recorded in the last part Of this chapter? We may learn that Jesus cured those who could not be cured by ordinary means, or remedies. The same was true of the miracles wrought by the Apostles. They did what doctors could not do, and did not turn from serious cases, as modern pretenders, who profess to be healers of the sick, are invariably guilty of doing. Moreover, when Paul commanded Timothy to use "a little wine" for his "stomach's sake," and for his "often infirmities" (1 Timothy 5:23), he indirectly condemned all objections to proper physical medicines for physical ailments, and condemned the idea that we should ask the Lord to heal us of ailments, which may be healed by medicines within our reach. The domain of prayer is in regard to help when we cannot help ourselves. We may, when sick, justly pray that the Lord, in his good providence, will enable us to find the physician, or find the remedy, by which we may be cured. But in all our prayers we should remember 1 John 5:14, and thus consider the importance of submitting to the Lord's will."Not my will, but Thine be done"—this should be the spirit in which we should always pray.

On the question of physical diseases, we may safely say, that for a person to refuse to take well-known remedies for diseases to which they are applicable, and yet pray to the Lord to be healed of those diseases, is as absurd as to pray to the Lord to satisfy hunger while refusing to eat food that is applicable to hunger. To this we may add that if we do not know what ails us, or are not able of ourselves to find the remedy for our ailment, then we may pray that in God's providence we may be led to understand our condition, or be led to find the right remedy. Here we find the domain of prayer with reference to physical sickness."Man's extremity is God's opportunity" on this question, as on all others. Yet in

every prayer in regard to all earthward affairs, we should say to the Lord, "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Mormonism has deceived multitudes who did not fortify themselves against it by searching the scriptures, so as to understand them. The same has been true of Adventism, Dowieism, Millennial Dawnism, Christian Scienceism, and of Gospel Trumpetism, otherwise known as Evening-Lightism. All these isms, like Catholicism, and all shades of sectarian Protestantism, have sufficient truth in them to deceive those who have not studied the Bible sufficiently to be fortified against them.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1.) The measure by which they should be tried is set forth by the Apostle Peter in these words: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

CHAPTER IX

What is here recorded? A record is here given of what the Savior did in calling and giving power, and authority, to his Apostles, also what he did in sending them forth to preach and to work miracles. A record is next given of what Herod said about John the Baptist, and Jesus, also of the fact that the Apostles returned to the Savior after they had preached and worked miracles for a time, and told him what they had done, and then comes the fact that the Savior instructed his Apostles privately, and healed those who came to him that had need of healing. After this we find a record of the fact that Jesus fed a multitude of about five thousand men.* This is followed by a record of a private interview between Jesus and his Apostles in regard to his own divinity, and his death, burial, and resurrection. Next we read of what Jesus said about the value of a soul, and of what will be the final result of being ashamed of him, also of what he said about the time when the kingdom of God would be established. The record then informs us concerning the transfiguration of Christ on a certain mountain, and this is followed by an account of Christ casting an evil spirit out of a certain man's son, after his Apostles had tried to cast out that spirit, and had failed. Mention is made of what the Savior said of his betrayal into the hands of "sinful men," also of the reasoning which his

disciples did in regard to who should be greatest among them, and a statement of the Savior's answer to them. What he said to John for rebuking a certain man who cast out evil spirits, in the name of Christ, but was not numbered with the Apostles, is next recorded, also that certain Samaritans refused to receive him, and what resulted from that which they did on that occasion. In the last of this chapter we find a record of a man who proposed to follow the Savior wherever he would go, and what the Savior said to him, also a record of another man who wished to go and bury his father, and what the Savior said to him. The chapter ends with a declaration in regard to unfitness for the kingdom of heaven.

What is implied by the statement, "As he was alone praying, his disciples were with him," as recorded in the 18th verse of this chapter? The implication is that he was separated from the multitude, and, in that sense was "alone."

What is indicated in the 24th verse? Those who would save their earth-life by denying Christ would lose the life which he would offer to those who would obey him, and, on the other hand, those who would lose their earth-life by confessing Christ would receive the promise of eternal life—this is the doctrine indicated in the verse now under consideration. The next verse has an intimation in the same direction.

And what may we learn by considering the 26th verse of this chapter? We may learn that we can take this verse and confute the doctrine of trine immersion as based on Matthew 28:19. This verse informs us concerning the second coming of our Savior, which will consist of one coming, and not a threefold coming. Now, if Christ can come once, and yet come in the glory of himself, of his Father, and of the holy angels, then we can be baptized once in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In other words, if for Christ to come in the glory of himself, of his Father, and of the holy angels, will not require a three-fold coming, neither does baptism into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, require a threefold baptism. Therefore, the verse we now have before us, when properly considered, confutes the doctrine of trine immersion as based on the 19th verse of Matthew 28th chapter.

What is indicated in the 27th verse of this chapter? This verse suggests Mark 9:1, which makes mention of the kingdom of God coming "with power," and Mark 9:1 suggests Acts 1:8, which indicates that the word, "kingdom," as here used, had reference to the Church which the Holy Spirit established, through the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost mentioned in the second chapter of Acts of the Apostles.

What was intended to be taught by the transfiguration of Christ on a certain mountain, and the appearance of Moses and Elijah with him? We are not definitely informed, and should not attempt to be more definite than the inspired record is. Peter did not know what it was intended to mean, but he thought he ought to say something, and, so he proposed that "three tabernacles" should be made, "not knowing what he said." The apostate church has done what Peter proposed, and travelers inform us that "three tabernacles," or church houses, may now be seen on the mountain where that church supposes Christ was transfigured. Others have sermons on that transfiguration, and have, in their sermons, supposed much, which, in The Sacred Text is not explicitly declared, nor clearly implied. All that we may safely say in regard to the purpose of the Lord in causing the transfiguration is indicated in 2 Peter 1:16-18. That purpose was to make Peter and certain others, "eyewitnesses of his majesty," and thus give to them another evidence of his divinity.

Why could not the disciples cast out the evil spirit mentioned in this chapter? In Matthew 17:20 we learn that they could not because of their lack of faith, just as Peter could not walk on the water, on a certain occasion, because he doubted. See Matthew 14:30, 31. Because the wind was "boisterous" he doubted, and because the evil spirit mentioned in this chapter threw its victim into convulsions, The disciples doubted. Thus it is with Christ's disciples, now, in many instances. In ordinary circumstances they have faith, but in extra circumstances they doubt. Their faith fails when the children of the devil make a great demonstration against them.

What is indicated in the 48th verse of this chapter? The tender regard which Jesus has for a "child," and the high regard he has for his own name, we find here indicated. To receive a "child" in "his name" is to receive him, also to receive the Father who "sent him." That which is meant by the "least" being the "greatest," as here stated, is set forth clearly in Matthew 20:26, 27, where we learn that Jesus said, "Whoever will be chief among you let him be your servant."

What may we learn by considering the 49th and 50th verses of the chapter? We may learn that the Apostle John did not know all that the Savior had done by way of sending forth men to work miracles. What should we say to sectarians, when they refer to the event, we are now considering, in order to prevent us from criticising them in their unscriptural procedures? We should inform them that the man whom John rebuked was doing good and doing it in the right manner, and

by the right authority. But that can not all be said of any sectarian church. When sectarians do good they generally do it in the wrong manner, with wrong purposes, or with wrong accompaniments, or in the wrong name. Therefore they cannot justly use the events set forth in the 49th and 50th verses of this chapter in their defense.

What is taught in the record here given concerning the fact that certain Samaritans did not "receive" the Savior because his face was toward Jerusalem? The record here informs us in regard to the Samaritan prejudice against the Jews, also in regard to the disposition of James and John, and, finally, of the Savior's disposition toward erring ones.

In view of the disposition manifested by James and John, what may we say of those artists who have represented John as an effeminate man, in appearance, and of those preachers who have spoken of him as the gentlest of the Apostles? They "do err, not knowing the scriptures," in regard to those Apostles. In Mark 3:17 we are informed that Jesus named them "sons of thunder," and here we learn that they were disposed to command fire to come down from heaven, to consume those Samaritans who would not receive their Master. All this indicates that the mentioned artists and preachers have done the Apostle John injustice, and have exhibited their own ignorance in so doing.

And what shall we say of the Savior's declaration that he came "to save men's lives, and not to destroy them"? This one declaration should cause every one who reads it to oppose the strong drink traffic with all possible earnestness. That traffic destroys men's lives, and all who would save men's lives, and not destroy them, must be opposed to that traffic in practice, as well as in theory. The "Golden Rule," as the doctrine taught in Matthew 7:12 is commonly designated, bears in the same direction. All who obey the doctrine taught in that scripture must oppose the strong drink traffic, for the man does not live who desires any one to make a drunkard of his son, and, therefore, he should not engage in making a drunkard of any other man's son. Moreover, all mankind are responsible for all the evil which they could avoid, but do not avoid. This being true, all those are responsible for the evils of the strong drink traffic who could avoid those evils, but do not try to avoid them. They are participants in the crimes which result from that traffic.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the man who proposed to follow Jesus wherever he would go, and of the answer which Jesus gave to him? The poverty

of Jesus is here set forth for our learning. And what of the man who wished to go and bury his father? The great importance of preaching the kingdom of God is set forth. And what is indicated by the last verse of this chapter? The importance of looking forward, and not turning backward, is indicated.

CHAPTER X

Of what are we here informed? We are first informed that Jesus chose seventy disciples, besides the twelve whom he had previously chosen, and sent them forth to preach and to work miracles, and that he told them how to behave themselves among the people, likewise what to do with reference to any city that would not receive them. We are next informed in regard to the "woe" which he pronounced on certain Jewish cities, and in regard to that which the seventy said when they returned to him, and what he said to them concerning Satan, and God's care over them, likewise concerning the reason why they should rejoice. That Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and what he said in his rejoicing, we find next recorded. An account is then given of a certain lawyer, and his interview with the Savior in regard to what he should do to "inherit eternal life." The chapter is ended with an account of Jesus entering into a certain village where he went into the house of two sisters, one of whom was much concerned in regard to his temporal welfare, while the other was much concerned about the teaching of Jesus which should "not be taken away from her."

What is the meaning of the word "hire" as found in the 7th verse? The Greek word here translated by the word "hire," also means "reward", of any kind, and the word "reward" would be a better translation, in this instance than the word "hire," because the preachers whom Jesus sent out to proclaim his doctrine were not hired, but they were called, commanded, and rewarded.

What is indicated by the severe sentences, pronounced by the Savior, against certain Jewish cities, as those sentences are set forth in this chapter? The doctrine indicated is that man's responsibility is according to light. This is evident from the fact that Jesus declared a severer sentence against certain Jewish cities that had opportunities for much light, than against certain heathen cities, that had not been permitted to have such opportunities. What he said about Capernaum, and Sodom, is another declaration of the same kind.

What is taught in the 16th verse? The importance of hearing those whom Jesus sent forth, and the danger of despising them, is here taught. That which was then true, is still true, in regard to that subject.

And what is set forth in the 18th verse? It suggests Revelation 12:7-9. Jesus, as “the Word of God,” was before all other created beings (Revelation 3:14), and, therefore, he was present when Satan was “cast out into the earth,” and to that fact he referred when he said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

And what is implied in the 20th verse? The implication here is that Christians should rejoice more in the assurance that their “names are written in heaven,” than if they should be permitted to work miracles.

What may we learn by considering the 21st and 22nd verses of this chapter? We may learn that Jesus was pleased with his divine Father's decisions, and this indicates that we should be pleased with them. The Father deemed it better to choose ignorant men, and to put power in them, to preach his Word and to work miracles, than to choose men of human might and power. Then, the Father was pleased to deliver “all things” to his Son, and thus gave to his Son the exclusive right to “reveal” the Father to mankind. This brings us to 23rd and 24th verses of this chapter, which indicate to us that we are blessed in proportion as we understand the will of God, as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And what may we learn by considering the case of the lawyer, who is mentioned in this chapter? We may learn that the doctrine of “eternal life” was taught among the Jews even before the Savior announced it. See Daniel 12:2, 3. We may learn also that the lawyer here mentioned was not as honest as he pretended to be, but pretended ignorance in regard to the meaning of the word “neighbor” in order to “justify himself.” Is this kind of pretension common among mankind? It is. Professed Christians sometimes pretend to be ignorant in order to “justify” themselves in some error which they have adopted.

Does the word “neighbor” refer to the place where a man lives? No. The man who lives nearest to us may be our greatest enemy, while our nearest neighbor—the one who will do most for us when we need help—may live a thousand miles, or more, distant from us. The word “neighbor,” according to the Savior's teaching, in this chapter refers to disposition of mind, and not to nearness in regard to space.

And what may we learn by considering the history given, in the close of this chapter, of Martha and Mary? They were like many sisters that now live—one was inclined to housekeeping, while the other was inclined to learn the truth. The housekeeper went to an extreme in yielding to her inclinations, and, in some instances, the one who is inclined to learn truth will go to an extreme in that direction. The best of housekeepers are often very ignorant of everything else, and the best of students, among women, are, sometimes, untidy housekeepers. Both of these classes should modify. Those inclined to housekeeping should consider the importance of learning all that is necessary to keep the mind and heart pure, while those inclined to study should consider the importance of keeping their houses clean. Both classes can find in 2 Corinthians 7:1 the exhortation which they specially need to observe in order to become better women in the sight of God and mankind.

CHAPTER XI

What are the outlines of teaching set forth in this chapter of the Sacred Text? First we are taught that Christ was praying, and, when he had ceased, one of his disciples requested him to teach them to pray, and that he did so, likewise that he taught the importance of persistence in prayer by setting forth, in an illustration, the results of making a persistent request of an indifferent human being. Then he taught his disciples to “ask,” to “seek,” and to “knock,” and assured them of favorable results by referring to the favorable disposition of parents toward their children. We are taught next that Jesus cast out an evil spirit, and was then charged, by his enemies, with casting out “devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.” Then we learn that others of his enemies “sought of him a sign from heaven,” but that, instead of giving them a sign, he answered those who had charged him with casting out evil spirits by the power of the devil. Next we learn that Jesus made mention of a man whose “last state” is “worse than the first.” The speech of a certain woman, and the Savior's response to her, we find next recorded, and this is followed by a speech to “the people , who were gathered about him, in which he set forth that the reason of the final condemnation of the men of that generation would be that they had sinned against light and knowledge. Remarks of the Savior concerning light are next set forth, and these are followed by a record of the fact that he was invited to dine with a certain Pharisee, who marveled because he sat down to eat without washing his

hands, and that in response to him Jesus made a severe speech against the Pharisees, and then against the scribes and Pharisees, and then against the lawyers. The chapter is ended with an account of “the scribes and Pharisees” urging Jesus and provoking him, “to speak of many things,” in order that they might hear something whereby “they might accuse him.”

May we safely speak of the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples to pray as “the Lord's prayer”? Yes. As he was the author of it certainly it was his prayer. But it was not the prayer that he prayed for himself, for it makes confession of “sins,” and he never committed any “sins.” But is that prayer appropriate for Christians to pray? No. It is not appropriate for three reasons: first, it has not the name of Christ in it; second, it prays for God's kingdom to come; third, it prays for forgiveness on the basis that the one who offers the prayer forgives. In all these respects that prayer is not appropriate for us. All our prayers should be offered in the name of Christ. Besides, God's kingdom has come, and we should forgive as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us, See Mark 9:1; Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 4:32.

Did the Savior intend to teach that his Father is like an indifferent friend, by making mention of such a friend in illustrating the importance of persistence in prayer? No. But the teaching is this: If an indifferent friend will yield to patient persistence in asking, then how much more will the kind heavenly Father yield to such asking? This is further evident by that which is said in the 11th, 12th and 13th verses about parents and children.

What may we say of the Savior's response to those who charged him with casting out evil spirits by the power of the devil? It is overwhelming in clearness and emphasis.

What is meant by the word “sons” in the 19th verse? It is used in a general sense, as when the Savior said, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.” (Matthew 9:2.)

What did the Savior intend to teach by that which he said about an “unclean spirit,” as recorded in the 24th, 25th and 26th verses of this chapter? In Matthew 12:45 we learn that Jesus concluded his speech about the “unclean spirit” by saying, “Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” On this subject, therefore, Matthew's record is more nearly complete than is the record of Luke. The same is true in regard to many other subjects.

What may we say in regard to that which is here declared about an unclean spirit walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none? We may say what is here set forth, and should not say anything more. Where the Scripture is silent we should be silent. We should read this by saying “uninhabited places.” This means places where those spirits could not find any bodies to enter.

What may we learn from the record here given of the woman who pronounced the Savior's mother “blessed”? That woman was filled with admiration for Jesus, and felt as all mothers feel in regard to an admirable son. They feel that the mother of such a son is “blessed.” But the answer which Jesus gave to that woman indicates that he regarded obedience to the word of God as more “blessed” than the bearing of an admirable son.

What may we learn by considering the record here given in regard to the Ninevites and the Queen of the South? We may learn by this record that rebellion, and stubbornness in rebellion, are high crimes in heaven's sight. Those who refuse to be convinced of their errors, or, being convinced, refuse to repent, show rebellion and stubbornness, even as did king Saul. See 1 Samuel 15:23. We may also learn by that which is here recorded what is meant in 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3, by the declaration that the saints shall “judge the world” and “judge angels.” By doing the divine will we shall show that the disobedient among men and angels are without excuse for their disobedience, just as the conduct of the Ninevites and of a certain queen will show that the men who rejected Christ are without excuse. In other words, those who obey God, in all ages, show that the disobedient who have equal, or better, opportunities, to obey him, are without excuse.

What is the chief thought in the Savior's teaching in this chapter concerning “light”? The importance of having spiritual light is here taught, even sufficient light to pervade the entire spirit-man. And where can we obtain such light? In the Bible. It is God's book of light.

What is set forth in the record here given of the Savior's speech to Pharisees and scribes? The hypocrisy of both classes, and the importance of being clean within, as well as without, we find here set forth. And what is here recorded against “the lawyers”? Their injustice toward their fellow mortals is here delineated, and the final judgment which will be inflicted against them is foretold.

Is the disposition of the lawyer who said to Jesus, "Thus saying thou reproachest us also," common in mankind? It is, especially in certain conceited classes. Those who think they belong to the favored ones of earth are not willing to be reproached. And what about the charge which Jesus made against the lawyers, declaring that they had "taken away the key of knowledge"? Those lawyers had used their influence to impose wrong ideas of the prophecies concerning the Messiah and his kingdom. As a result, they prevented the people from understanding the kind of kingdom which Jesus came to establish. As a farther result, they would neither enter themselves nor suffer others to enter.

CHAPTER XII

Of what are we informed in this chapter of Luke's record of Jesus the Christ? We are first informed of the Savior's warning against hypocrisy, and the reason which he gave to his disciples for that warning, likewise that he told them in regard to whom they should not fear, and warned them whom to fear and the reason why they should fear him. Next we are informed in regard to confession of Christ as a condition of salvation, and concerning blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as the unpardonable sin. This teaching is followed by instruction intended specially for the guidance of the Apostles of our Savior when they should be brought before "magistrates and powers." Next we find a record of a man who requested Jesus to assist in dividing an inheritance, and that which Jesus then said in regard to covetousness, and in regard to unnecessary anxiety concerning temporal things. Then we are confronted with the Savior's teaching with reference to the importance of his disciples being always "ready" for his second coming. The basis of man's responsibility is then set forth, and this is followed by Christ's reference to his sufferings and death under the figure of "a baptism," also to the division which he came to make. Next we find a reproof of those whom he addressed because they did not understand the signs of the "time" then passing. The chapter is ended with instruction in regard to dealing with an "adversary," and the reason for that instruction.

Is that which the Savior set forth in the 2nd and 3rd verses of this chapter against all secretism? It is in a certain sense. The Savior warned his disciples against "hypocrisy" and then gave his reason for such warning in a speech

on secret things being revealed. The bearing of this is that Christ's disciples should avoid doing in secret that which would damage their character if made known to the public, and that they should always avoid what is wrong in heaven's sight.

Does the 10th verse mean that forgiveness will be extended to those who speak against Christ, even if they do not repent? No. Other scriptures inform us that repentance and baptism are necessary to the pardon of an alien sinner, also that repentance and prayer are necessary for the pardon of an erring disciple. See Acts 2:38; 8:22.

Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit unpardonable? We are not informed. But the Holy Spirit was sent upon Jesus, and by the Spirit he became the anointed of God. The Holy Spirit baptism gave to Jesus his official name— “Christ”—and enabled him to do his official work. Besides, as far as we are informed, the Holy Spirit was sent by Jehovah's will, and, therefore, Jehovah would not pardon blasphemy against him.

What may we learn by considering what is taught in this chapter in regard to covetousness? We may learn that a man's physical life consists in such things as he can use, and not in the “abundance” that he may have, which he cannot use; likewise, that the man who sets his heart on the temporal affairs of this life, and does not prepare for the life to come, is a “fool.”

Does the teaching of the Savior against taking thought for food and clothing apply to all disciples as it did to the Apostles? No. Jesus intended to provide for them both spiritually and temporally. He told them not to take any thought concerning what they should say when brought before “magistrates and powers,” but that does not apply to us who live under the fulness of the Gospel Age. The same is true in regard to that which he said about taking thought for temporal things. The Apostles did not need to prepare themselves to speak at any time, but we need to “study,” even as Paul commanded Timothy. The Apostles, especially in course of Christ's personal ministry, did not need to work, but the command to us is that we shall not be “slothful in business.” See Romans 12:11; 2 Timothy 2:15.

And what may we learn from that which is here set forth in regard to the second coming of Christ? We may learn, and

should learn, the importance of being always ready for the Lord to return. The Savior illustrated the importance of being prepared for him by two parables—one concerning the uncertain time of the return of a master to his home, and the other concerning the uncertain time of a thief coming to steal.

On what principle are we taught in this chapter that man kind are held accountable? On the principle of light, or knowledge. Among men, and before God, all mankind are accountable according to the light, or knowledge, which they are permitted to enjoy.

Why should a servant who does not know his master's will be punished for not doing it? He ought to know his master's will, and could know it, if he so desired. This is true, as a rule, yet as it is possible that he could not know all that his master requires he should receive the benefit of the doubt which may exist. Therefore, he should be “beaten with few stripes.” There is a dignity in law which requires that all offenders against it shall receive some punishment.

What is meant by the word “fire” in the declaration recorded in the 49th verse? The 51st verse indicates that when the Savior used that word in the 49th verse he referred to the “division” which would result from the preaching of his doctrine among mankind. The Apostle Peter makes mention. of “the fiery trial” which is to try Christians. (1 Peter 4:12.)

Has the Savior's prophecy about division in families been fulfilled? It has, in many thousands of instances, and will continue to be fulfilled till the close of time.

What is the bearing of that which Jesus said in the latter part of this chapter about discerning that “time”? The people exercised their good judgment in regard to “the face of the sky,” but seemed to discard their good judgment in regard to Christ's teaching and miracles. Is it still true that “the people” show better judgment in regard to temporal affairs than they do concerning those that are spiritual? Yes. Persons of good judgment in ordinary affairs often act foolishly in regard to religion.

What is the bearing of that which the Savior says in the last of this chapter? Christians should avoid lawsuits whenever possible. They should suffer loss, rather than go into a lawsuit before worldly courts. Yet Paul's “appeal to Caesar , should not be forgotten, See Acts 25:11.

CHAPTER XIII

What is set forth in this chapter for the instruction of those who read the Bible? First, we find a record of that which Jesus said in regard to certain Galileans, and of certain other persons who were killed by the falling of a certain tower. Next we find a record of a parable of a barren fig tree, and then an account of Jesus healing a woman who had been afflicted eighteen years, likewise of his controversy with "the ruler of the synagogue," at that place, who criticized because the mentioned woman had been healed on the sabbath. The parable of the "mustard seed" is next recorded, and then the parable of the "leaven." This is followed by mention of a man who wished to know whether "few" would be saved; and a record of the Savior's answer to that man. Next we find a record of what certain Pharisees said to Jesus about that which Herod would do to him, and of the answer which Jesus gave to them. The chapter is ended with an account of the lamentation which Jesus uttered over the city of Jerusalem, his prophecy concerning its desolation, and of the time when the Jewish people, as a nation, will gladly receive any one who will come to them. "in the name of the Lord."

What conclusions may be safely drawn from the record given in the first of this chapter? We may conclude that Jesus intended to teach that those whom God had suffered to be killed, as mentioned, were not sinners above all others, and that those whom he then addressed needed to repent. Did he intend to teach that if they did not repent that they should be killed, in the manner that certain Galileans were killed, and as certain men at Siloam were killed? No. The word "likewise" should not be applied so as to convey the idea, that those whom the Savior addressed, at that time, should "perish" as those perished whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, and as those also perished on whom a certain tower fell. Therefore, the word "likewise," in the mentioned address, must refer to the persons addressed, and not to the manner of their death. This being true, the conclusion then is that Jesus meant to say, Likewise ye shall all perish, or ye, likewise, shall all perish.

What is indicated by the fact that Pilate had "mingled" the blood of certain Galileans with their sacrifices? We are not definitely informed, but the implication is that he had killed them while their sacrifices were being offered.

What is indicated by the parable of the barren fig tree, as here recorded? In view of the lamentation and prophecy against

Jerusalem, as recorded in the last of this chapter, the parable of the barren fig tree was intended to embrace a prophecy against the Jews. In regard to righteousness, such as God required, they were a barren nation, and he intended to give them but a brief period in which to improve, and bring forth such fruit as he required.

What shall we say of the criticism which the ruler of a certain synagogue offered on the Savior for healing a certain woman, and his response to that ruler? The criticism was contemptible, and the response to it was overwhelming.

What was intended to be taught in the parable of the “mustard seed,” and that of the “leaven,” as here recorded? The former parable was intended to teach the small beginning, and great advancement, of the kingdom of heaven, while the latter was intended to set forth the assimilating power of that kingdom—the power to make that around it like unto itself.

In view of the use here made of “leaven,” what shall we say of those who declare that the word “leaven” is always used in an unfavorable sense in scripture? We should say to them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” The use here made of it is favorable, for it is used to illustrate the assimilating—making-like—power of the kingdom of heaven.

What may we learn by considering the question found in the 23rd verse, in regard to “few” being saved, and the answer which Jesus gave to that question? We may learn, and should learn, that whether “few,” or many, will be saved, should not be our chief concern, but we should, individually, “strive” to save ourselves by doing the divine will. Does that which the Savior here said about striving, and about many seeking to enter “the strait gate,” and not being “able” to enter it, teach that mankind can easily be saved? No; but it teaches the very opposite doctrine. The Savior here indicates that the salvation of mankind is so difficult that intense earnestness is necessary in order to attain to a saved condition.

What is indicated by the plea, “We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets”? It indicates that many persons will try to be saved on very easy terms, even on terms of their own choosing. What is indicated by the 27th verse? The impossibility of deceiving the Savior is here indicated. And what is the bearing of the 28th verse? Its first bearing is against the disobedient Jews, who rejected Jesus when he was personally among them,

and then against those Jews who afterwards rejected the Gospel. It also bears upon all other disobedient ones.

What may we say of the 30th verse, in this connection? In the light of the last two verses of this chapter we may say that it was intended to refer to the Jews who, as a nation, were the first to hear the Gospel, and will be the last to accept it. Then, as we learn elsewhere, the Gentiles, who, as nations, were the last to hear the Gospel were the first to accept it.

Did Jesus seem to be afraid of Herod? No; but, in view of the disposition he had manifested, Jesus spoke of him as a “fox,” and indicated that he knew the place where he would be put to death, and, therefore, Herod could not “kill” him.

What may we say of the lamentation of Jesus over Jerusalem, as recorded in the last of this chapter? It is touching, dignified, comprehensive—worthy of its author and of the occasion which called it forth.

What is indicated by the word “desolate,” as used in the last verse of this chapter? That word, as here used, indicates that the Jewish people would be given over into the hands of their enemies, and that they would be driven out of their own land. That same word is used in Isaiah 1:7, in a prophecy, with reference to the driving of the Jews into the land of Babylon.

But what may we say of the Savior's declaration to the Jewish people, as a nation, “Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord”? This declaration is a clear intimation, and even a clear indication, that the Jews, as a people, will, at some date, in the future, believe in Christ. The words “me” and “Lord” as connected in this verse make this conclusion unavoidable. When the Jews will become believers in Christ, then they will pronounce every one “blessed” who will come in his name. The 11th chapter of Romans strongly confirms this conclusion.

CHAPTER XIV

Of what axe Bible readers informed in the chapter now before us? We are first informed concerning what Jesus said and did at the house of “one of the chief Pharisees,” where “lawyers and Pharisees” were present. Next we are informed in regard to “a parable” which he set forth on that occasion, when he noticed the behavior of some of the guests, after which he told the man who had invited him to eat with him what kind of a feast was pleasing to the Lord and would be

of advantage “in the resurrection of the just.” Then we read of a man who said, “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God,” and of the Savior’s response to that man. A record is next given of what Jesus said about the disposition which would be necessary in all men who would follow him, and this is followed by a speech which he made concerning a man who might wish to build a tower, and in regard to a “king, going to make war.” In the latter part of this chapter we find remarks concerning the value of salt, and its lack of value when it has lost its “saltiness.” The chapter is ended with an exhortation in regard to hearing.

Would modern ideas of decorum approve the Savior’s speeches in the house of a certain Pharisee, as recorded in the first of this chapter? No. He first confuted “the lawyers and Pharisees” who were present, on that occasion, by what he said in regard to doing good on the sabbath, then he reproved those guests who chose “chief , places in the house of the Pharisee who had invited him to eat with him, and having reproved them he gave instructions to that Pharisee in regard to making a feast for which he would be rewarded “in the resurrection of the just.” All this would be considered unbecoming in a guest at any man’s table. Yet the preciousness of truth, and the importance of making it known at the right time, justified the Savior in saying what he did on the occasion referred to in this chapter.

What is taught by the account recorded, in this chapter, concerning the man who “made a great supper and bade many”? In view of the parables found recorded in the last of Matthew 21st chapter, and the beginning of the 22nd chapter of Matthew’s record, we may safely conclude that the teaching here is, that the Jews were the first to be invited to obey the Gospel, and that when they would refuse to accept it, then the Gentiles would be invited to obey it. Matthew 21:43 clearly indicates this conclusion.

In what sense should the word “hate” be regarded, as found in the 26th verse? It should be regarded in a relative, or modified, sense, and not in an absolute, or unmodified, sense. This is clearly indicated in Matthew 10:37-39. Moreover, when Christians were persecuted unto death, and consented to die, rather than deny Christ, they seemed to despise all of life’s relations in order to be true to Christ. This is indicated by what Paul said of himself in Acts 20:22-24, and in Philippians 3:4-9.

What may we learn by considering that which the Savior said in the latter part of this chapter about a man building a

tower, and a king going to war? We may learn that he intended to teach the importance of those who proposed to follow him considering before they begin what it will cost them. Jesus did not propose to flatter, nor to deceive, mankind, in any measure or degree with reference to that which would be required of them if they would follow him. On the contrary, he warned them that they would be persecuted, and thus would be required to endure much for his sake. This is a proof that he was not an impostor, but was, in all respects, what he professed to be.

What is the bearing of the 33rd verse? Its first bearing was that those who would follow him, personally, when he was on earth would need to forsake all of their earthly affairs. Is the same now required of those who follow Christ? No. In the fulness of the Gospel Age the followers of Christ may pursue an earthward calling, and may, generally, rejoice in the family relationship. They are, even, instructed concerning those relations. Yet all who follow the Savior acceptably need to be so devoted to him that they would turn from all those relations, and even suffer death, before they would deny the Savior. This being true, all Christians need to have the spirit of martyrs. If we do not possess that spirit the Savior knows it, and, therefore, knows that the only reason we do not deny him is because we are not tempted by having our lives threatened.

What is meant by the Savior's reference to "salt" in the last verse of this chapter? In view of its connection it means that Christians without willingness to die for Christ, as well as forsake all earthly relations, are like salt which has lost its saltiness. No wonder, then, that Jesus said of the narrow way, "few there be that find it," and no wonder he said in the last of this chapter, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

CHAPTER XV

In what may Bible readers become informed by studying the chapter now before us? We may become informed in regard to a criticism which certain "scribes and Pharisees" offered on the Savior because he received sinners and ate with them, likewise in regard to the Savior's method of replying to his critics on that occasion. Instead of making a direct response to them he spoke the parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost money, and then told them of a lost son, who returned to his home, and whose elder brother murmured because his father received him with joy on his return, and

made a feast for him. The chapter ends with an account of that father's assurance to his older son that he appreciated him, and by a statement of his reason for receiving his younger son with joy.

What is the most prominent lesson taught us in this chapter? The joy experienced in finding what was lost—joy on earth in finding an earthly object that was lost, and then joy in heaven because lost sinners repent. The record here given of the lost son is ended with an account of a father's joy in receiving to his home a lost son who repented of his wanderings and returned to his home.

What may we say to those who suppose that the Savior did not mean what he said in regard to “just persons” in the 7th verse of this chapter, but that he meant hypocrites, such as the scribes and Pharisees were? We should say to them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” But what should be our response if they say it is unreasonable to suppose that heaven more highly esteems one sinner who repents than ninety-nine “just persons who need no repentance”? We should again say, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” The Savior used the word “joy,” and not the expression “highly esteems,” and each of the three illustrations used in this chapter sets forth the idea contained in the word “rejoice.” In order to understand the Savior's teaching in this chapter we only need to confine our minds to that which he actually stated, for if a child is lost there is always more joy in finding it alive and well than is felt in considering children that are not lost. Why? Simply because the anxieties, of those who learn of the lost one, are drawn out in behalf of that one. Thus it was in regard to the shepherd and his lost sheep, also in regard to the woman and her lost money. Thus it was in regard to the father and his lost son, and thus it is in regard to heaven and lost sinners. God has caused angels to be interested in the sinner's welfare, and when the sinner repents angels rejoice. Here is the chief lesson of this chapter, and by setting forth this lesson the Savior endeavored to show his critics that sinners—especially sinners who repent—are precious in heaven's sight. By the account which he gave of the older brother murmuring, because his father had received his younger brother with joy, the Savior also endeavors to show his critics the absurdity of their position in murmuring at him because he associated with sinners.

What should we say to those who suppose that the older brother, mentioned in this chapter, represented the Jews, while the younger brother represented the Gentiles, and that his mur-

muring was intended to represent the complaint that certain Jewish brethren made against the Apostle Peter for going to the house of Cornelius, as recorded in Acts 11th chapter? We should say that such a supposition is not in harmony with the facts. The Gentiles were older in their disobedience than the Jews were in their existence. Besides, the Jews , glorified God,” when they were assured that God had “granted repentance unto life” to the Gentiles.

CHAPTER XVI

And what is here set forth for our learning? A brief history of an unfaithful steward, followed by practical remarks, on the principle which exists in faithfulness, is here given. Then we find declarations in regard to serving two masters, and remarks against the Pharisees who were covetous. Next we find mention made of the period of the Old Testament law and prophets, the preaching of the kingdom of God, and a statement concerning marriage and divorce. The last part of the chapter sets forth an account of a certain rich man, and of a very poor man, in regard to this world and beyond.

What may we learn by considering the record given in the first of this chapter of a certain rich man and his unjust steward? We may learn that the steward here spoken of was not only unjust, but was shrewd, and, in a worldly sense, was wise, because he endeavored to use his master's goods so as to make a place for himself when he would be put out of his master's stewardship. We may also learn that the Savior referred to that steward's shrewdness as an illustration of that which Christians should do, at least, in one particular, namely, they should so use what they have in control of this world that they will please God and Christ. This is clearly set forth in the 9th verse of this chapter, especially when we use a translation of it which says, “Make to yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness.” That is to say, Jesus commands his disciples to use their earthly possessions so as to make for themselves friends who will, finally, receive them into “everlasting habitations.” God and Christ are the only “friends” who have such “habitations,” and thus' the command in the 9th verse requires such use of earthly means as will please God and Christ. 1 Timothy 5:17-19 teaches the same doctrine.

Why is earthly wealth here designated “mammon of unrighteousness”? We are not definitely informed, yet the unrighteous use, generally, made of earthly wealth may have formed the basis for such a designation.

What may we learn by considering the principle by which the Savior measures faithfulness? We can readily understand that it is correct. He that will steal a cent, at one time, is not honest, and may steal a dollar at another time. Moreover, he that is careless about his work in little things cannot be trusted in regard to great things. On this principle the Savior indicates, in the 11th verse, that a man who is dishonest in temporal affairs is not fit to be a preacher, nor to be in any other position of trust in the Church. Then the 12th verse indicates that if a man is not faithful in handling that which pertains to another he is not fit to have anything of his own.

What is set forth in the declaration, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," as recorded in the 13th verse of this chapter? The idea that whoever will be a servant of this world, and will make the gathering of wealth, or hoarding of it, his chief business, cannot serve God, is here set forth. Did the Pharisees who heard the Savior gather this idea from what he said? They did, and because they were "covetous" they derided him, or treated him with contempt.

Is it true, in every particular, that whatever "is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God," as is indicated in the 15th verse? That depends on the emphasis placed on the word "highly," and the kind of "men" spoken of. It is always true that the things which are most highly esteemed by "covetous" men are an abomination in the sight of God. The same is true of all the proud, the vile, and the abominable, characters among mankind.

Did "every man" press into "the kingdom of God," as preached by John the Baptist and Jesus? Here again the truth of the statement is made to depend on the limitation of the words used. It was true that every man who was honestly disposed for eternal life then pressed into "the kingdom of God" and the same is still true.

What of the doctrine of marriage and divorce, as stated in the 18th verse of this chapter? It is more fully stated in Matthew 19:9. An exception is mentioned by Matthew which should always be kept in mind when this subject is considered.

Should the case of the rich man and Lazarus, as recorded, in the latter part of this chapter, be spoken of as a parable, or as a real instance? It bears every indication of having been a real instance, and those who say that it is only a parable shaped up for the occasion can never tell what it was in

tended to illustrate, except by appealing to their imagination in a degree that reflects on their common sense and common honesty. Some say that the rich man represented the Jewish nation, and the poor man represented the Gentile nations. But the question arises, Who are represented by the rich man's "five brethren"? If it be said that the present spiritual condition of the Jewish nation is represented by the condition of the rich man in torment, we may inquire whether Lazarus in Abraham's bosom represents the condition of the wicked Gentile nations that are, with one accord, sinning against light and knowledge to the utmost of their power, except a few faithful persons in several of these nations. But these are only two, of many, questions which may be pressed to the confusion of every one who declares that the record given in this chapter of the rich man and Lazarus sets forth a fictitious parable, and not a real instance.

But what may we say to those who ridicule the idea that the rich man was condemned because he was rich, and Lazarus was saved because he was poor? That is not stated, nor is it implied, by anything set forth in the record, as here given. The Savior had set forth the evil of being "covetous" in regard to earthly wealth, and it was very appropriate that he should set forth the torment in reserve for a rich man who suffered a poor man to lie at his gate and die there. It was also very appropriate for the Savior to set forth the blessed condition in reserve for one man who was poor, and thereby indicate that poverty, in this life, would not prevent one from being "comforted" after this life will be ended. Therefore, considering the last of this chapter in the light of the first part of it, the folly of designating the case before us as a "parable," and trying to defend such a designation, becomes evident beyond all question. Universalists, and materialists, who are always wrong on their favorite themes, are chief in the folly which has just been mentioned.

Is there anything else in this record which should be specially considered? Yes. The mistake of praying to a saint, who had died, is here illustrated. The rich man in torment prayed to Abraham twice: once in behalf of himself, and once in behalf of his five brethren. Neither of his prayers was answered, and this illustrates the mistake of praying to dead saints in the Gospel Age. Matthew 7:22 , 23 are also illustrated in the record here given of the rich man in torment. The Savior implied, in his sermon on the mount, that there is a degree of religious deception so deep and terrible that even death will not entirely banish it. The rich man's prayer to Abraham

is an illustration of such deception. Though in torment, yet that rich man was not entirely without hope, but thought that a prayer for himself, and for his brethren, might be heard and answered. Here is a warning against religious deception which should terrify all classes of mankind, and should cause them to study their Bibles with diligence every day.

Having exposed certain errors which speculators have imposed on themselves in regard to this record of the rich man and Lazarus, the question arises, What may we learn by considering it? We may first learn that it teaches those who are willing to learn that riches will not save and poverty will not condemn, but that the richest man may be condemned, and the poorest man may be saved. Second, those who are willing to learn may understand, by considering the case of the rich man and Lazarus, that after this life will be ended those who are worthy to be saved will be taken by angels to paradise, here called "Abraham's bosom," and will be "comforted," while those not worthy to be saved will be, at once, taken to a place of torment. Third, we may learn that between the saved, and the condemned, in the unseen world, there is a great gulf fixed which prevents those on each side of it from passing to the other side, and that those on each side cannot change the condition of those on the other side.

Is the word "hell" as used in the 23rd verse, a proper translation of the Greek word used in this place? It is not. The Greek word here translated by the word "hell," should be translated by the word "unseen," or by the expression "unseen world," or "under world.," In the Greek text of the New Testament are three words—"Gehenna," "Hades," "Tartarus"—all translated in the common version by the word "hell." This is misleading. The word "Gehenna" is the only word which should be translated by the word "hell," as it is the word, above all others, which refers to the final abode of the wicked. The word "Hades" refers to the unseen world and embraces the domain of two other words, namely, "Paradise," and "Tartarus." The former of these is the place of the righteous, and, therefore, the Savior said to the penitent thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," and in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 Paul speaks of "paradise" as the "third heaven." Yet the word "Hades" is sometimes used where the place called "paradise" is meant. See Acts 2:31. As a result when the word "Hades" is translated by the word "hell" confusion results. The word "Tartarus" designates the place of torment in

“Hades,” or the unseen world (2 Peter 2:4), and in that passage it is, in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, translated by the word “hell.”

CHAPTER XVII

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed of certain declarations of our Savior concerning offenses, and trespasses, and faith, and duty. Next we are informed in regard to the miracle which the Savior wrought in cleansing ten lepers, and of one of them who praised him. Then we find a record of an inquiry concerning the coming of the kingdom of God, and the Savior's response to that inquiry.

Who were referred to by the expression “little ones,” as recorded in the last part of the 2nd verse of this chapter? Matthew 18:6 indicates that reference was made to the disciples. There is a difference between the expressions “little child,” and “little ones,” as used in Matthew 18th chapter. The former expression referred to a child in stature, but the latter referred to those who were children in understanding. See the use made of the word “babes” in Matthew 11:25.

Does that which Jesus set forth in regard to trespasses, in this chapter, indicate that he intended his disciples to forgive without repentance on the part of those who had trespassed against them? No. The condition, “if he repent,” as here expressed, forbids such a conclusion. But that which is here stated indicates that Jesus intended that his disciples should forgive their trespassing brethren as often as repentance might be expressed by them. Does Jesus indicate, or even intimate, that his disciples might sit in judgment on the sincerity of those who would profess repentance? No. The question of their sincerity is always between them and God. We must not judge motives before they are fully revealed by actions or words.

What was intended to be taught by that which is set forth in this chapter concerning a servant doing his “duty”? That we can only do our “duty” to God, and cannot bring him in debt to us, is here taught.

What may we learn by considering the case of the Samaritan leper, whom Jesus cleansed? He showed gratitude, and thereby showed the disposition which all the redeemed of mankind should always have toward God and Christ. Even those who have never obeyed the Gospel should ever be grateful for the divine benevolence as far as they are informed concerning its manifestation in their behalf.

What may we learn by the statement, recorded in the last of the 20th verse, that “the kingdom of God cometh not with observation”? The next verse informs us that “the kingdom of God” was not divinely intended to be a formal power established on the earth which could be seen by the outward eye, but that it would consist of the reign of God within mankind,

What were the 23rd and 24th verses intended to teach? They were intended to teach that when Jesus will come again the glory of his coming will be such that it will shine, even as the lightning shines from one part of the heavens to the other. See also Revelation 1:7.

What may we conclude from the reference made in the latter part of this chapter to the condition of mankind, generally, when the flood came, and reference to the Sodomites when their city was destroyed? We may conclude that all modern talk about “taking the world for Christ” is in vain. The world of mankind, as such, will not yield to Christ, but will, generally, remain in disobedience, even till Christ will come to gather the redeemed of earth to himself.

Does not the 31st verse have reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the haste with which the disciples should flee from that city when they would have the opportunity to leave it? Yes; and in Matthew 24th chapter we find a record of both the destruction of Jerusalem, and the second coming of the Savior, which is more nearly complete than the brief mention which is made of those events in the chapter of Luke which is now before us. Therefore, we should consider Matthew's record, of the mentioned events, as found in the 24th division of that apostle's account of the earthlife of our Savior.

Why should we “remember Lot's wife”? She looked back, while fleeing from Sodom, and by so doing she, by a divine judgment, lost her life on earth, and if Christ's disciples would look back while fleeing from Jerusalem they would be in danger of losing their life; and if we look back at that which our salvation requires us to leave, we may fail to obtain eternal life.

To what is reference made in the 33rd verse of this chapter? That verse has reference to those, on the one hand, who would seek to save their earth-life by denying Christ, and those, on the other hand, who would lose their earth-life by confessing Christ. See Matthew 10:32-39, also Mark 8:34-38.

To what did Jesus refer in the 34th, 35th, and 36th verses of

this chapter? By reading Matthew 24:37-41, in connection with 1 Thessalonians 4 , 16, 17, we learn that Jesus referred to the changes which will occur when he will come to gather his faithful ones to himself. Then those who will have died will be raised, and those of the faithful who will then be living will be taken from the unfaithful who will then be living. Two men will be in one bed, in many instances, and the faithful one will be changed in body—made immortal—and the one who will not be faithful to Christ will be left to have a part in the tribulations which will follow. But was not all this fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed? No. Besides, the word “taken” as found in the 34th, 35th, and 36th verses of this chapter, was not appropriate if reference was here made to disciples leaving Jerusalem of their own accord.

But what may we say of the 37th verse? Luke does not give us the connection of that verse as Matthew does. See Matthew 24:28. Luke's record of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the second coming of the Lord, in this chapter, is very much like his record of the sermon on the mount, as he referred to that sermon in the 6th chapter of his record. In both of these chapters he stated the truth, and mentioned events, regardless of their historic connection. By so doing he gave evidence that he was not a personal witness of events which he recorded, in this record, but recorded them as he had learned them.

CHAPTER XVIII

What is recorded for our learning in the chapter now before us? A parable concerning prayer is first recorded, followed by an instance of two men who went up into the temple to pray. Mention of the fact that infants were brought to the Savior and what he said with reference to them, we then find in this record. This is followed by an account of a certain ruler inquiring of Jesus what he should do “to inherit eternal life,” , also what Jesus said in answer to him. Next we learn that Peter inquired what he and his brother Apostles should receive in view of the fact that they had “left all” and followed him, also what Jesus said in response to him. Next we find a record of the fact that Jesus told his disciples what would befall him at Jerusalem, likewise that they did not understand what he said to them on that subject. The chapter is ended with an account of Jesus healing a certain blind man of his blindness, who then followed Jesus “and gave praise unto God.”

What was intended to be taught by the parable in regard to

prayer, as recorded in the first of this chapter? The importance of persistence in prayer is the first lesson here set forth. Did the Savior intend to teach that the divine Father is, in any respect, like the judge mentioned in this parable? No. But the idea is this: If a judge, such as is here described, could be moved by the “continual coming” of a certain woman, how much more would the heavenly Father be disposed to grant to us our repeated petitions. Yet in all our praying we should consult the Lord's will, as is indicated in 1 John 5:14.

What is the chief lesson we may learn by considering the case of the Pharisee and publican who are here mentioned as praying to God? The chief lesson here set forth is, that humility before God is required in those who wish to pray to God acceptably.

What is indicated by the record here given of Jesus, and the infants that were brought to him? The mistake which his disciples made in their ignorance of the Savior's disposition toward infants, the kindness of the Savior as shown by what he said on that occasion, we find here indicated, also the use which he made of that occasion to speak of the humility necessary to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Of what are we specially informed in the record here given concerning the rich ruler who inquired of Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life? We are informed that, like many who now live, he was self-deceived. He thought that he was willing to do everything that Jesus would require of him, but when tested he showed he was not willing, but turned from the Savior in order to cling to his earthly possessions.

What is indicated by the declaration, “None is good save one, that is God”? That declaration must be taken in the sense of absolute, unmodified, and eternal, goodness. Jesus derived his existence, and, therefore, his goodness, from Jehovah, the only true God. But God did not derive his existence, nor goodness, from any one. He is eternal in existence, and, thus, is eternal in all his attributes.

What is meant by the expression “needle's eye” as recorded in the 25th verse? In the absence of reference to any other kind of a needle than that which is commonly designated by the word “needle,” we are impelled to conclude that when the Savior used that word he had reference to a sewing “needle.” Moreover, as it is impossible for a camel, as such, to go through the eye of a sewing needle, so it is impossible for a rich man, as such, to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Do all who forsake earthly possessions in this life obtain more “in this present time” than they forsake? Yes. The Savior said so, and, therefore, in some sense, it must be true. Besides, those who have much in possession do not, as a rule, forsake it. Then those who forsake what they have of earthly possessions, for Christ's sake, and are faithful to him, will become connected with a brotherhood which will be worth more to them, even from an earthly viewpoint, than all the possessions which they forsook on his account. This was certainly true of all the Apostles, and, has been, in a measure, true of all who have followed their example.

Why was it that the disciples did not understand Jesus when he spoke to them of his death and resurrection? They had received the idea that the Messiah would establish a temporal kingdom, and they did not understand how that could be done if he should be put to death. This is a fair illustration' of the power of an error to possess the thought of mankind so as to becloud their mental vision, and, thereby, exclude the truth.

And what may we learn by meditating on the case of the blind man referred to in the last of this chapter? That blind man knew what ailed him, and desired to receive his sight. In those respects he was in advance of many of those who are spiritually blind. As a rule they do not know what ails them, and do not desire to be healed.

CHAPTER XIX

What are the outlines of this chapter? An account of a man named Zaccheus, and of that which Jesus said to him, is here given. This is followed by a parable concerning a nobleman who went into a far country, and who delivered unto his servants his money to use till he would return. Next we read of Jesus preparing to enter Jerusalem, and then that he entered it. The chapter is ended with a statement of what he said, and did, after he entered Jerusalem, and of the disposition of the “scribes, and of the chief of the priests,” also of “the people,” in regard to him.

What may we say of Zaccheus? He was more liberal, and more careful to be just, than most rich men now are.

If Jesus came “to seek and to save that which was lost,” as is recorded in the 10th verse of this chapter, what may we say of the doctrine of individual election and reprobation from eternity? It is a falsehood. Those who are lost, according to that doctrine, are numbered with the lost because

God was pleased to place them among lost ones, and, therefore, Jesus could not come to seek and save them without doing that which is opposed to the Father's will. But Jesus said of himself, "I do always those things that please him." (John 8:29.) This certainly means that he did not try to save those whom his Father had fore-ordained to be lost.

What is set forth for Bible readers in the parable of the nobleman here recorded? The reward of faithfulness, or the reward bestowed on those servants who will be faithful in the absence of their master, is here set forth. This parable likewise teaches that the same sentence of approval will be given to all faithful ones in religious life, whether they will have been numbered with servants of great responsibilities or those of small responsibilities. According to this parable the Lord will approve faithfulness in that which is least as well as in that which is great. Then, by considering the case of the unfaithful servant mentioned in this parable, we should learn the danger of being unfaithful even in that which is least.

What is the meaning of the word "austere," as recorded in the 22nd verse? It means "harsh, sour in flavor," also, rigid, ungenerous. , This being true, what may we say of the excuse which the servant who had received only one pound made? It was foolish, in the extreme, and illustrates the foolishness of all excuses which disobedient ones make for not serving the Lord. If that servant knew his master to be a hard, or harsh, or severe man, he should, on that account, have been very careful to do his best to please him. But that man's disposition illustrates the foolish excuses which have been, and will be, framed by wrong doers for not doing what is right.

What does the word "usury" refer to, as found in the last of the 23rd verse? It refers to that which, in modern times, is designated by the word "interest." Does this indicate that the Savior sanctioned exacting interest on money loaned? Yes, and by close examination we find that he sanctioned all other kinds of lawful business. Yet he requires that all business should be managed with charity as well as with justness. "Blessed are the merciful," is a part of his teaching. See Matthew 5:7. The Jew was not permitted to lend anything to his brother Jew upon usury, but might thus lend to a stranger. See Deuteronomy 23:19, 20. Christians should treat each other as generously as Jews were required to treat their brethren.

Did Jesus ride only the colt of an ass into Jerusalem, on the occasion here mentioned? Matthew 21:5-7 indicate that he

rode both the colt and his mother, and according to Zechariah 9:9 his appearance in thus riding into Jerusalem should be a sign of him as the Messiah, or “King” of the Jews. If the Jews had only studied that prophecy of Zechariah with care they would have been able to recognize Jesus as their Messiah, or “King,” when he entered the city as Matthew 21:7 declares that he did enter it.

What is found, in this record of our Savior's approach to Jerusalem, which is not recorded in any other account of it? The 41st verse declares that when Jesus “was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.” This is not recorded elsewhere.

Were the chief men of the city disposed to destroy Jesus before his time to die had come? They were, but were restrained by the interest which “the people” showed in his teaching.

Is it still true that “the people” are, generally, more willing to hear the truth than their leaders are? Yes. The ignorant masses are not as much opposed to truth as the learned classes are.

CHAPTER XX

What are the subjects chiefly mentioned in this chapter? Authority is the first subject here mentioned. Certain prominent Jews inquired of Jesus by what authority he did certain acts, and this inquiry is followed by a record of his answer to them. Next we find the unfaithfulness of the Jewish nation set forth in an illustration. Then we find a record of the effort made by prominent Jews to find a ground for a charge against Jesus before the Roman governor. This is followed by his answer to those Jews. Next we are informed that certain other prominent Jews came to him with a question concerning the resurrection, and we find a record of his answer to them. Then we find a record of a question which Jesus asked certain Jews concerning himself. The chapter is ended with a warning against “the scribes”—those who copied and cared for the Jewish writings—whom he charged with delighting in prominence, and acting the part of hypocrites.

What may we learn by considering the Savior's answer to those who questioned him in regard to his authority? We may learn, and should learn, that he was master of the situation, and knew how to confuse those who, with wrong motives, questioned him.

What may we say of the record given in this chapter of a vineyard? In this record we find a clear illustration of the misconduct of the Jewish nation as set forth in much of their

history. God gave to the Jews their land, and instead of remembering him with gratitude they forgot him, and mistreated his prophets who were sent to rebuke them for their wrongs. Besides, the Savior knew that they would kill him, and, that, in punishment for that sin, summed up in the sin of rejecting his Gospel, they would be overthrown as a nation, and made an unhappy people for many centuries.

What did the Savior mean by the word “stone,” as found in the 17th and 18th verses? He meant that he was “the stone which the builders rejected,” and that the Jewish nation would be “broken” by falling upon, or over, him. See Isaiah 8:14, 15 and Romans 9:32, 33. In those scriptures we learn that the meaning of falling on a stone was expressed by the word “broken,” in an unfavorable sense. But what is meant by the expression, “grind him to powder,” as found in the 18th verse? Psalm 1:4 declares that the wicked shall be “like the chaff,” in the Judgment, and here they are spoken of as if crushed or ground “to powder.” The complete overthrow of the wicked, in the last great day, is, therefore, referred to in the last of the 18th verse, for then the severity of the divine judgment will fall on the wicked. See Matthew 25:41.

And what may we say of the Savior's answer to “the chief priests and the scribes,” who tried to find a reason for accusing him before the Roman governor? He showed his superiority to them, and confused them.

What may we learn by considering the Savior's answer to the Sadducees who questioned him in regard to the resurrection? He showed by his answer that he was superior to them, and was prepared for their inquiry. We may learn also that all materialism in regard to man's soul, or spirit, is a falsehood. The 38th verse of this chapter declares that “all live unto him”; that is, even those that are dead to us “live” unto God. This proves beyond controversy that all “soul-sleepers”—all who deny conscious existence of mankind between the death and resurrection of the body—are in error. As the Savior said in Matthew 22:29, they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.”

What may we learn by considering the record here given of that which the Savior said about himself as David's son, and as David's Lord? We may learn that Jesus was David's “son” according to the flesh, but David's “Lord” according to the spirit.

Are there any persons now living who delight in prominence

among mankind, and who are hypocrites? Yes. All religious persons, who are not truly humble, are hypocrites. Do persons sometimes assume humility, who are proud in heart, and stubborn in spirit? Yes. This is common. What is the best evidence of the right disposition in mankind? Willingness to be convinced of an error, and to turn from it when convinced, is the best evidence of the right disposition.

CHAPTER XXI

Of what are we permitted to read in this chapter? First of all we read of a poor widow, of her gift, and of that which the Savior said concerning it. Next we read of that which some persons said to the Savior about the temple, and what he said in response to them about its destruction, about the persecutions which should come upon them, and that his disciples should depend on him for speech with which to answer their adversaries at all times. Then we read of instructions which Jesus gave to his disciples in regard to that which they should do when Jerusalem would be encompassed with armies, and this is followed by statements concerning the distress of certain classes in those days of distress. Then we read of the end of the age when Christ will come again, and we learn that Jesus spoke a parable to illustrate what he had stated concerning his kingdom. A warning to the disciples is next recorded, and the chapter is ended with a record of the fact that in the day time he taught in the temple, but at night he went out into the mount of olives, also, that the people came to the temple early in the morning to hear him.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of a certain widow, of her gift, and of that which Jesus said concerning it? We may learn that heaven estimates on a different principle from that which is common among mankind. The common inquiry is, How much did you give? But heaven inquires, How much were you able to give? What effect should this have on the poor? It should encourage them to do their best. And what effect should it have on the rich? It should alarm them, and even terrify them, when they think of their lack of self-denial in giving. One poor man, or woman, in giving a dime, a nickel, or a cent, may, in heaven's sight, receive credit for giving more than many rich persons will receive credit for giving in their entire lifetime.

How much of this chapter refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jewish nation? What the Savior said on that subject begins with the 6th verse and ends

with the 24th. And what do we next find in this chapter? Mention is next made of the end of the Gospel Age, of which we may also read in Revelation 6:12-17. See also Revelation 1:7.

What is set forth for our learning in the 24th verse? That the Gentile nations should have a period called “the times of the Gentiles,” is here implied, and that until those “times” will “be fulfilled” the city of Jerusalem will be “trodden down” is explicitly stated. In Romans 11:25 we read of that same period. Both of these scriptures imply that, at some date in the future, the Jews will return to Jerusalem, and will rebuild that city.

To what does the expression “kingdom of God” refer in the last of the 31st verse? It cannot refer to the establishing of the kingdom on the day of Pentecost, as that occurred nearly forty years before Jerusalem was destroyed. Therefore, it must refer to the coming of the everlasting kingdom, when the Lord Jesus will return to gather his faithful ones to himself.

And what shall we say of the declaration found in the 32nd verse? In Matthew 24:34 that same declaration is used, and in a connection which shows that it referred to the destruction of Jerusalem. This is evident from the difference between the expressions “these things,” and “that day,” as found in that chapter. The former expression referred to the destruction of Jerusalem while the latter referred to the last period of the Gospel Age. In the prophecy of Joel, as quoted in Acts 2:16-20, we find an illustration of important events, widely separated in time, brought together in prophetic writings. Joel made mention of the beginning and ending of the Gospel Age—the beginning was indicated by the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and the ending was indicated by a statement of the wonders which will occur in heaven and in earth, at the end of the Gospel Age. Thus it is in Matthew 24th chapter, Mark 13th chapter, and the chapter of Luke which we have just considered. The destruction of Jerusalem was first foretold, and then the ending of the Gospel Age, which will be attended with wonders in heaven above, and in the earth beneath. While prophetic vision was given with reference to one class of wonders, another class was brought into view. This was common with the Old Testament prophets.

CHAPTER XXII

What is here recorded for our learning? First we find a statement of certain events which occurred a brief period before

the feast here spoken of as “the passover,” then we find an account of events which occurred when the time for “the passover” had come, likewise an account of the preparation and the eating of “the passover.” This is followed by an account of the giving and partaking of bread and fruit of the vine in memory of the Savior's body and blood. Mention is then made of the one who betrayed the Savior into the hands of his enemies, after which is recorded a speech that he made to his disciples in regard to the difference between greatness among the Gentiles and among his followers. Next we read of what the Savior said to his disciples about appointing them a kingdom, after which we find a record of a speech that he made to Simon Peter in regard to that which Satan desired with reference to him, what Peter said he was willing to do, and what Jesus told him he would do. Next we read of the change which Jesus commanded in regard to purse and scrip, and certain other equipments, from that which he first ordained when he sent his disciples forth to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. See Matthew 10th chapter. The Savior's oppression of spirit and his prayer, in the garden of Gethsemane, is next recorded, then his betrayal by Judas, his trial before the chief priest, his denial by Peter, followed by mention of Peter's repentance, of the mocking of the Savior, of the question asked him concerning whether he was “the Christ,” and “the Son of God,” also mention of his answer, and of the effect it had on his questioners.

What should we say to those who teach that the expression “this passover,” as recorded in the 15th verse of this chap. ter, indicates that the passover which the Savior ate with his disciples, on the night of his betrayal, was not the regular passover of the Jews, but was some other feast? We should refer them to 2 Kings 23:23 and 2 Chronicles 35:19, and show them this same expression where it was certainly applied to the regular passover of the Jews.

And what should we say to those who declare that Jesus did not eat the Jewish passover on the night of his betrayal, but instituted a feast of beef, and soup, and bread, which should be called “the Lord's supper,” and then instituted the bread and fruit of the vine, which should be called “the communion,” and not “the Lord's supper”? We should refer to the records as given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and should show how often they use the word “passover” in regard to that which the Savior ate on the night of his betrayal, Next we should show that if those writers so often used that word, but did not mean what they said, then all scripture is

unreliable. Therefore, we must conclude that the Savior ate the Jewish passover, though he ate it near, or about, one day before the usual time. But what shall we say if some one declares that for Jesus to have eaten it before the usual time would invalidate it? In response we should refer him to Numbers 9th chapter which informs us of an arrangement for certain men to eat the passover a whole month after the usual time. From this we conclude that the Lord could change the day, as well as the month, to accomplish an end which he had in view, though he did not allow man to make such a change without divine permission.

What should we conclude from the Savior's teaching in regard to "lordship" and "authority," as set forth in the 25th, 26th and 27th verses of this chapter? We should learn that greatness in the kingdom of Christ consists in serving our brethren, and, through them, serving the best interests of mankind in the world.

What is indicated in the 30th verse of this chapter? The official position of the Apostles by their teaching and preaching is indicated. This is illustrated by the case of Jeremiah. He was set over the nations by the words which God gave him to speak concerning the nations. On this principle the Apostles were set up as judges, and by their teaching, as recorded in the New Testament, they will judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

What of the record here given of Peter's profession of devotion, his temptation, sin, and repentance? Peter was impulsive, and showed that he did not know himself, yet he repented when he "remembered the Word of the Lord."

What is meant by the expression "sleeping for sorrow," as recorded in the last of the 45th verse? It cannot be explained to those who have never been oppressed with sorrow, and those who have been thus oppressed do not need any explanation of it. Yet the statement may be safely made that when sorrow is so oppressive that it causes its victims to sink low in feeling, then sleep often comes to the relief of the sorrowing one. Thus it was with the disciples, in the garden of Gethsemane, on the night of their Master's betrayal.

What was intended to be taught by the statement, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness," as recorded in the 53rd verse? It was intended to convey the idea that the time had come for Jesus to be taken by his enemies, and for "the power of darkness" to gain a short victory over him.

CHAPTER XXIII

What is recorded in this chapter for Bible readers to learn? We find here recorded an account of the trial of Jesus, before Pilate and Herod, also an account of his condemnation, his death by crucifixion, and of the burial of his body.

What may we say of the charges brought against Jesus? They were as false as many that are now brought against his true followers.

What is suggested by the fact that Herod and Pilate were made friends, as recorded in the 12th verse of this chapter? The fact that enemies of Christ's disciples, who are at variance with each other, sometimes become friends in order to damage those disciples.

What is referred to in the 17th verse of this chapter? Matthew 27:15 and Mark 15:6 indicate that the Roman governor at Jerusalem was accustomed to release to the Jews at the time of the passover some prisoner, in whose favor they presented to him a petition. Therefore he inquired of them whom they desired him to release unto them at that time. They chose a man charged with sedition and murder. What was indicated by the choice which those Jews then made? They showed that they were afflicted with a common weakness—they rejected their best friend, and chose a bad man.

What is the bearing of the 31st verse? The Savior had told those women who lamented over him, because of the treatment he was receiving, the evil days should come upon them, and then added, "For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" The application is this: If the Jews treated Jesus in that manner, what would they not do to others? In Matthew 10:25 we find a statement which bears in the same direction. The Savior there said, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?"

What may we learn by considering the case of the penitent thief, as recorded in the last of this chapter? We may learn that he received a promise which implies that he was pardoned, and will be, finally, saved. What should we say to those who infer from this implication that water baptism is not necessary to salvation? We should remind them that Jesus made to that thief the promise which implies that he would be saved before the Jewish law was entirely fulfilled, and even before he had died. This means that the mentioned thief lived and died under the Jewish law, and, therefore, his case is not a standard by which any one can be justly

measured in the fulness of the Gospel Age. The thief who prayed to the Savior, while hanging on the cross, was promised salvation on the other side of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, while those who live in the Gospel Age are on this side of all those events. This shows that the salvation of the mentioned thief without water baptism does not even intimate that any responsible being, who lives in the Gospel Age, can be saved without such baptism.

What do the words “preparation” and “sabbath” refer to, as found in the 54th verse of this chapter? John 19:14 informs us that they refer to the “preparation” which was made for the first day of the “passover” which was a “sabbath,” or day of rest. See Exodus 12:16. Therefore the words “preparation” and “sabbath” in the 54th verse, of the chapter now before us, do not refer to the preparation usually made for the weekly sabbath, but to the preparation that was made for the first day of the feast, which day was a sabbath, or day of rest. In view of this the conclusion is unavoidable that two sabbaths, at that feast, came together; first the feast sabbath, and then the weekly sabbath. Those two sabbaths, were the two full days that the body of Jesus rested in the grave.

CHAPTER XXIV

And what is recorded in this chapter—the last of Luke's record of the earth-life of our Savior? A record is here given of the fact that those who went, on the first day of the week, to the tomb, where the body of Jesus had been laid, found that the body was not there, also that they saw two men who told them that Jesus had risen from the dead, and that when they told certain others what they had seen and heard they were not believed. Next we learn that the Apostle Peter went to the sepulchre, and that he did not find the body of Jesus, and left wondering. Then we read of two men, who went to a village not far from Jerusalem, and that Jesus joined them as they went, also that they did not know him as he walked and talked with them along the way, but became known to them when he took bread and blessed it as he was at a table with them. Next we learn that they arose and went to Jerusalem, and reported to the eleven what they had seen and heard, also that when they had made their report Jesus appeared in the midst of them, and made himself known unto them by showing his hands and his feet, and by eating in their presence. In the remainder of the chapter we find a record of that which Jesus said to them in explaining the proph

ecies which referred to him, making mention of what he had previously told them, opening their understanding, after which he gave them his world-wide commission, and then ascended to heaven. The chapter is ended with a statement of the fact that Christ's disciples worshiped him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and continued in the temple praising and blessing God.

Who were those that went, early in the morning, to the sepulchre where the body of Jesus had been laid? The 10th verse informs us that they were certain women.

Were those two men who went to the village, Emmaus, and to whom Jesus joined himself, numbered with the Apostles? No. The 33rd verse of this chapter indicates that they were not of the eleven Apostles, for when they returned to Jerusalem they found the , eleven gathered together. , Besides, in the 18th verse we learn that the name of one of them was Cleopas.

What is indicated in the 30th verse of this chapter? The fact that Jesus “blessed” bread, or gave thanks for it, while he was sitting, or reclining, at a table, as here stated, indicates that it is right to sit while giving thanks at a private table.

To what conclusion are we impelled by the 37th verse? We are impelled to conclude that the disciples were not materialists in religious belief, for if they had been they would not have “supposed that they had seen a spirit.”

What is indicated by the fact that Jesus showed his hands, and his feet, and ate material food before his disciples? The fact that he had the same body that had been laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, we find here indicated, and this implies that his body had been literally raised from the dead.

What may we say of the division of the Old Testament, as mentioned in the 44th verse of this chapter? It embraces all those parts of the Old Testament which make the most definite mention of Christ. He was written of “in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. ,

What may we learn by considering Luke's version of the last commission of Christ to his Apostles, as it is stated by him in the 47th verse of this chapter? It is important for us to consider this version of that commission, in connection with the versions given by Matthew, Mark, and John, for Luke mentions “repentance and remission of sins” more plainly than any of those other writers do. Matthew mentions teaching and baptism, and the word that he makes use of

for teaching implies belief or faith; Mark mentions belief and baptism; while John simply mentions remission of sins. But Luke mentions “repentance and remission of sins.” Therefore Luke's record of the Savior's world-wide commission is very important, as it explicitly mentions the important change expressed by the word “repentance.” Moreover, Luke also mentions, in his report of that commission, that the preaching which should be done should begin “at Jerusalem.” This is also very important to be considered, as it is in harmony with Isaiah's prophecy, “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” See Isaiah 2:3.

How may we account for the various versions of the Savior's world-wide commission, as reported by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John? We may account for them by considering the differences between explicit statements and implications. What one of those writers explicitly states, or sets forth in exact words, implies all that the others set forth in exact words. For instance, Matthew says , “Teach all nations,” and the Greek word that he uses to express the idea of teaching means “make disciples of. Therefore, the word “teach,” as used by Matthew , implies belief, repentance , and confession. Thus it is in all the other records of the mentioned commission. Mark records, preaching the Gospel and believing. This implies to “make disciples of.” Luke records, preaching and “repentance,” and this implies to “makes disciples of.” John simply records remission of sins , and this implies all that precedes remission of sins. See John 20:23. Thus we may safely explain the four versions of the Savior's general commission which he gave to his Apostles. Moreover, if we consider the entire Bible we do not find many subjects that are fully set forth by one writer , or in one book. The rule is that we need to search in several places in order to find the fulness of the divine revelation on any subject. In view of this we can understand the danger of being technical, and of settling down on any passage of scripture , and supposing that the divine mind, on the subject it mentions, is fully revealed therein. We can also understand the importance of disciples of Christ endeavoring to learn all that the Bible sets forth.

What did Jesus refer to when he spoke of “the promise” of his Father, as mentioned in the 49th verse? He referred to the Holy Spirit. This is evident by that which is declared in Acts 1:8; 2:23.

Is there any conflict between the statement found in the last

verse of this chapter and the 13th and 14th verses of Acts first chapter? There is not. The Apostles, after Jesus had ascended, may have spent a part of each day in the temple, and another part in "an upper room." Different statements, and even statements which seem contrary, may be harmonized, as they may only be different parts of the same record. They are not contradictory because they do not exclude each other. Only those statements should be regarded as contradictory which positively exclude each other.

What may we safely say of Luke's record of the Gospel, as a whole, or as an entire document? It is so clear and dignified that it bears marks of inspiration in its style, yet his lack of historic connection of events, and teaching, indicates that it is what Luke said in its beginning about having received from others what he proposed to write. The order of events and teachings, as he set them forth, indicates that he was a reporter of current testimony, and not an actual witness of what he saw and heard. But, as previously stated, the style of his document shows that he was supernaturally guided. Besides, the reports he made of the speech of Zacharias, and Elizabeth, of Mary and of Simeon, clearly indicate that he was an inspired writer. Those speeches, especially the speech of Elizabeth, and that of Mary, were spoken in private and could not have been reported by any one except the Holy Spirit in the beautiful, dignified, and prophetic style, in which they are set forth. Therefore, we may safely believe that Luke was an inspired reporter, even as Mark was, while we may also believe Matthew and John were inspired witnesses. The Gospel records, then, come to us attested by two inspired witnesses, of what they saw and heard, and by two inspired reporters, who recorded the testimony of those who were actual witnesses of the words and works to which they testified. The end that was intended to be accomplished by the testimony of all those writers was and is to produce faith in Christ as the Son of God. See John 20:30, 31.

JOHN

CHAPTER I

What are the outlines of this chapter—the first of the record of Jesus Christ which is offered to us by the Apostle John? That Apostle first informs us who Jesus Christ was before he was manifest in the flesh as Jesus of Nazareth, and what was his relationship to the origin of the material universe. Next we are informed concerning John the Baptist in his relation to God, and his official relation to Jesus. This is followed by declarations concerning Jesus as the Light of the world, as the Word of God made manifest in the flesh, and certain statements concerning him, as made by the Apostle who offers us this record. We next find an account of certain testimony which John the Baptist gave concerning him self, also concerning Jesus. The testimony informs us in regard to the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, also of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, and of John's testimony concerning Jesus as the Lamb of God. Then we read of two disciples of John the Baptist following Jesus and of certain facts concerning one of those disciples, whose name was Andrew. Next we are informed concerning Andrew's brother, whose name was Peter, also of the name Cephas which Jesus gave to him. Two other disciples, Philip and Nathaniel, are next mentioned, and certain statements made of what those disciples said and did. The chapter is ended with a record of an interview between Jesus and that one of those disciples whose name was Nathaniel.

What special revelation is made in the beginning of this chapter? The revelation that the person made known in the New Testament as Jesus Christ had a definite existence, as a divine being, in the beginning of the material world, also that he existed as “the Word,” and was worthy of being spoken of as “God.” Is there any other revelation in the New Testament on this subject? In Colossians 1:15-19; Hebrews 1:1, 2 and Revelation 3:14 we find more on the same subject. Taken together, or separately, these several scriptures set forth that a divine Being was with Jehovah before the beginning of the material world, and he was the agent of Jehovah in creating this world. Colossians 1:15-19

inform us that he was the one by whom all angels were created. Then Revelation 3:14 makes mention of that Being as “the beginning of the creation of God.” and thus informs us that he is a created Being.

All the scriptures, just referred to, when taken together, imply that the One who is revealed to us in the New Testament, as Jesus Christ, was brought into existence by Jehovah before all other beings, and before anything of the material world was created, likewise that he served Jehovah as his Word to bring all other beings, and all material things, into existence. That is to say, these scriptures reveal that Jehovah did not personally do all that pertained to the creation of “the worlds,” but before he began to create them he created another Being who consisted of Jehovah's Word concentered, or united, or formed, into a Being, who was worthy to be called “the Word,” and even worthy to be called “God.” Then through that Being, or by his co-operation, Jehovah brought all other beings in heaven and earth into existence, likewise created all things that exist. In view of all this we can understand what Jehovah meant when he said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” See Genesis 1:26, also Hebrews 1:3. The “Word” was created in “the express image” of Jehovah, and Jehovah proposed to him, saying, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Then in Genesis 1:27 we read, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” In view of the fact that man bears the image of God, capital punishment for murder was authorized. See Genesis 9:6. That basis for capital punishment still exists, and, therefore, capital punishment for murder is still divinely authorized.

What should we say to those who declare that for us to acknowledge Christ as God would be to acknowledge two Gods, and that this is contrary to scripture? We should, first of all, read to them the first verse of the chapter now before us, likewise Hebrews 1:8, and then we should ask if they believe the divine testimony, and are willing to let that testimony be the end of controversy with them. Next we should inquire if a father is reflected on when he says of his son, who has passed beyond the days of his youth, that he is a man. To ask this question is to answer it in the negative. Finally, we should inform our critics, on this subject, that the word “Jehovah” means eternal, and that because he is “from everlasting to everlasting” (Psalm 90:2), Je-

hovah is the only true God. All that “the Word” was and is, he has derived from Jehovah . Though “the Word” is declared, in Isaiah 9:6, to be “the everlasting Father... yet that title must be understood in the light of Hebrews 13:8. A Jewish translator of this expression declares it should be “of the everlasting Father,” which relieves us in regard to its meaning.

What is indicated in the 9th verse of this chapter? The Word, as the creator of all material light, and as the one, by reason of whom, and through whom, all spiritual light is given, is the one who gives light to or “lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” In other words the Being who was with Jehovah in creating “light,” with all other created existences, is certainly the one who “lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” and every other being “that cometh into the world.” Even the physical light, which mankind and dumb animals have, comes from him.

To what does the 11th verse refer? It refers to the Jewish people. They were Christ's own people, because he was a Jew, but they did not know him; that is, they did not understand his relation to the Father, nor his relation to the origin of the world, nor his relation to them as their Messiah. The 10th verse indicates this as the meaning of the 11th. The Apostle John first stated that Jesus was in the world, and though the world was made by him, yet the people of the world did not know him. Then he stated that he came to “his own”—his own people—and they did not know him. Is this still true? It is, with few exceptions. And what is worse , the world does not desire to know Christ. Many of his professed followers do not desire to know all that he requires of them.

What is taught in the 12th verse? The explicit teaching, in that verse, is that to “believe” in Christ was to “receive him,” and it teaches that he gave “power” to all who believed on him, to “become sons of God.” Then the implied teaching is that in order to “become sons of God” something more than to “believe” on the name of Christ is necessary, for the declaration is here made that he “gave power to become the sons of God” “to them that believe on his name.” This shows that believing on his name was the condition of receiving “power to become the sons of God.” Another item of implied teaching' found in this verse, is that all who believe on the name of Christ so as to receive him have assurance that he will give them “power” to be

come the children of God. This implies that all true believers will, in divine providence, be led into the light of the Gospel so that they will be enabled to understand it, and they will have the life and “power” granted to them which will be necessary for them to obey it. Therefore all those who try to break the force of the divine teaching concerning water baptism by supposing the case of a man who truly believes, and repents, and confesses, but dies before he can be baptized, are guilty of making a supposition in direct opposition to the 12th verse of this chapter. This verse declares that “as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” And as it was then, so it is now, and so it will be till the close of time. The true believer will be led in the way of obedience, and will be enabled to obey.

What may we learn by considering the 13th verse? We may learn— that in order to be children of God we must conform to the will of God, and not to “the will of man.” This implies that we do not become children of God by obeying human creeds and confessions of faith, but by rendering obedience to the gospel of God's grace.

What is set forth in the 14th verse? The doctrine of the incarnation of the “Word,” or the doctrine that the divine Being named the “Word” took upon himself a human body is here set forth. The expression “was made flesh” means that the “Word” took upon himself a fleshly body. See Hebrews 2:16; 10:5.

What is taught by the 17th verse? The word “law” in this verse refers to the Jewish law, and is here used in the sense of “figure,” “shadow” and “punishment.” See Hebrews 9:9; 10:1, 29. In that sense the word “law” is here used in contradistinction from “grace and truth,” as revealed in the Gospel. Romans 7:12 informs us that “the law” is “holy, and just, and good,” consequently it is true, but it is true as a “shadow,” and as a “figure,” and not as a reality, or as a substance. Therefore, the idea here set forth is this: The shadow came by Moses, but the substance came by Christ.

How can we harmonize the declaration, “No man hath seen God at any time,” with Old Testament instances of men seeing God? All those instances indicate that the Lord appeared by an angel, or by some other manifestation of his power. See Exodus 3:1-6.

What may we learn by considering the last part of the 18th verse? We may learn that the relationship of the “Word,”

as “the only begotten Son,” was very near to Jehovah as the “Father,” for the declaration here is that he “is in the bosom of the Father.”

What is taught in the 21st verse which we should specially consider? The denial of John the Baptist that he was Elias or the Elijah of the Old Testament, is here taught, and, thus, all those are in error, on this subject, who say that he was Elijah. He came “in the spirit and power of Elias” (Luke 1:17), but he was not Elias in person, raised to life again, nor the personal spirit of Elijah in the body of John the Baptist, as some have supposed.

What is referred to by the expression “that prophet,” in the 21st verse? We are not definitely informed but in view of the blindness of the Jews in reading the prophecies concerning Christ we are bound by historic limitations to conclude that they did not understand that Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 referred to Christ, and, thus, they supposed that the word “prophet” in those verses, referred to some special “prophet” who should come separate from the “Messiah.” This conclusion seems not only reasonable, but even unavoidable, in view of what the divine record declares.

What is indicated in the 29th verse? That Jesus Christ as “the Lamb of God,” who should be put to death for mankind, would, thereby, satisfy the offended justice and take away the violated law by which mankind, universally, were under condemnation. See Romans 5:12-21. The sin of Adam and Eve brought the human family under condemnation. But the death of Christ has relieved all mankind from the condemnation thereby inflicted. Moreover, Christ, by his death, made propitiation, or satisfaction, for the actual sins of all our race. See 1 John 2:2. Yet he only proposes to save those of mankind who will obey him, from their actual sins. See Hebrews 5:8, 9; 1 Timothy 4:10. Besides, on account of Christ all mankind will be saved from the grave. (I Corinthians 15:22.) Thus it is that, in a two-fold sense, Christ is the Savior of the entire human race. He has saved all from the condemnation resulting from Adam's sin, and will save them all from the grave by raising them from the dead. Yet he proposed to save only those with an “everlasting salvation” who would obey him.

What is the special value of the 37th verse of this chapter? Its value consists in the fact that it is a historic connection between the work of John the Baptist and the work of Jesus, because it states that two of John's disciples followed

Jesus. John the Baptist came to prepare a people for the Lord. He did so by preaching the good news of the kingdom, and by baptizing those who believed what he preached so that they were willing to obey what he was authorized to require of them. Judging by the divine record, given of John the Baptist, he did his work aright, and, therefore, it did not need to be done again. He was not sent to establish the Church of Christ, and did not attempt to do so. But he preached that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and, therefore, the people who heard him were required to believe, repent, and be baptized with water baptism, “for”, or “unto,” or “into,” “remission of sins.” See Mark 1:4. This was very different from those who date the church of which they are members from the preaching of John the Baptist.

What may we learn by the account given in the last part of this chapter concerning Nathaniel? He was an Israelite who was without “guile”, and was ready to believe in Jesus. This intimates that those who are now without “guile” are ready to believe the doctrine of Christ, while those who have guile in them are not ready to believe it.

Is there any fulfillment of the last verse of this chapter found in the divine record? No. But that does not imply that it was not fulfilled, for this same writer declares that he did not record all that occurred. See chapters 20:30; 21:25. Yet in Matthew 4:11 we find an intimation concerning the ministry of angels in behalf of Jesus, likewise in Luke 22:43. Acts 20:35 sets forth an instance of words of Jesus quoted which were not previously recorded. Therefore, while the divine record is sufficient to teach us the way of life, yet we do not find therein set forth everything that was said and done on earth by our Savior, nor by any other person mentioned in the Sacred Text. The divine record is complete in itself, though it does not give an account of all that was said and done by every one of whom it makes mention.

CHAPTER II

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We find a record here of a marriage, at a place named “Cana of Galilee”, and of certain words and events which pertained to that occasion, also a record of the fact that Jesus went to a city named Capernaum, and that he afterwards went to Jerusalem and cleansed the temple of certain men who had made it a place of merchandise. Then we read of an interview between Jesus and certain Jews concerning a sign, also of

the effect of that which Jesus said, at that time, had on his disciples. The chapter is ended with a declaration that many believed on Jesus in Jerusalem at the passover because they saw his miracles, but that he did not commit himself unto them because he knew what was in man.

Was Jesus disrespectful to his mother when he inquired, “What have I to do with thee?” as recorded in the 4th verse? The Common Version, likewise the Revised Version, of the text so indicates. But the translation in these versions is not correct. “What is it to me and to thee, woman?” is the translation which should be given of this passage. In other words, Jesus inquired of his mother, “What is it to me and to thee” even if “they have no wine”? This is more respectful, and more in harmony with the occasion, though the Greek form of expression here used may sometimes be translated, “What have I to do with thee?” meaning, What is common to thee and to me?

What should we say to those who make evil use of the fact that Jesus changed water into wine at a certain marriage feast, by citing it in favor of drunkenness, or that which leads to drunkenness? We should say to them that before distilled drinks were made drunkenness was not an evil to the extent that it is now. Besides, wine, when properly made, is nutritious, and, therefore, beneficial to the human body. In view of this, it could, while Jesus was on earth, be used without reproach. Even in Paul's day on earth wine was not wholly forbidden, but the use of “much wine” was forbidden. See Titus 2:3. But now, in view of the kinds of strong drink that are generally made, and the extent to which drunkenness has become a curse among people of nearly all nations, every scripture which requires truth, sobriety, honor, uprightness, justice, righteousness, purity, peace, obedience to God, and good-will toward mankind, requires that strong drink of all kinds shall be discarded, condemned, hated, abhorred and loathed.

What may we learn by considering the fact that Jesus drove those out of the temple in Jerusalem who were using it as a place for buying and selling, and for changing money? We may learn that he did not intend that his Father's house should be perverted from its original purpose, See Matthew 21:13. And what does this intimate to us? It intimates, and even indicates, that the Church, as consisting of obedient believers, should not be perverted from its original purpose. The Church of God is now the house of God, and was prefigured by the tabernacle and the temple

of the Jews. As it was wrong to pervert the temple so it is wrong to pervert the Church. As the temple was not a place for merchandise, neither should the Church, as such, enter into worldly business, not even into the business of religio-secular schools.

What is indicated by the declaration, “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up”? Jesus, in his zeal for the purity of his Father's house ' did that which incurred the displeasure of the Jews who were guilty of perverting the temple to that which pertained to secular affairs. As a result, he was hated, and because of this and other reproof of their wrong doing, they persecuted him, and finally took counsel against his life. Thus it was that his zeal for his Father's house consumed him, or cost him his life. Though he was, finally, charged with blasphemy, yet, according to John's record, his first offense against the Jews was in cleansing the temple.

What should we conclude in view of that which is declared in the 24th and 25th verses of this chapter? Our conclusion should be that Jesus still. knows what is in mankind, and therefore we are, at all times, exposed to his knowledge. He was a perfect mind-reader while he was on earth, and we have evidence that he is still the same. In Revelation 2:23 he says of himself) “I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts.” This indicates that he is the heart-searcher, and knows the public walks and private ways, even the secret thoughts and emotions, of all mankind. Therefore, all classes of mankind should be always on their guard, and should ever consider that the Lord knows them. “Thou, God, seest me,” as expressed by Abraham's wife's servant maid, when she had fled from her mistress, should never be forgotten by any son or daughter of our fallen race. The secret of vice and immorality among mankind is, first of all, found in earthward inclinations; and, secondly, in the failure, on the part of a majority of mankind, to consider the divine attributes. That God is unlimited in all his powers, and, as the 139th Psalm informs us, he knows even the secrets of the human mind and heart, cannot be remembered while vice and immorality of any kind is practiced. Only in proportion as mankind forget God and Christ can they become workers of iniquity. To remember God and Christ is, therefore, the sovereign remedy against all evil thoughts and deeds.

CHAPTER III

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Information is here set forth concerning an interview between the Savior and a certain ruler of the Jews in regard to our Savior's relation to God, and the necessity of a man being "born again" in order to enter the kingdom of God. This is followed by an explanation of the conditions of the new birth, and remarks by the Savior, to the mentioned ruler, with reference to his ignorance concerning what had been said to him. Next we read of what the Savior said about the serpent in the wilderness, the love of God for the world, the justification and the condemnation of 'the world of mankind. The disposition, in regard to light, of those who do what is true, also of those who do what is evil, we find set forth. Then we read of Jesus, and of John the Baptist, baptizing. The remainder of the chapter has reference, partly, if not wholly, to John the Baptist.

Why did a certain ruler of the Jews, named Nicodemus, go to Jesus at night? We are not informed, and therefore his reason for going to him at night can never be a matter of faith, or belief, but it belongs to the domain of opinion. We can all believe that Nicodemus went to Jesus by night, also that he spoke to him as "Rabbi," or Master, and that he told him he was a "teacher, come from God," stating his reason for his conclusion. All this we can believe because it is all clearly stated in the record before us. But the reason Nicodemus went to Jesus at night is not stated, and, therefore, we can only have opinions in regard to that reason. One person may prefer the opinion that Nicodemus was too busy in course of each day to visit Jesus; another may think that Nicodemus knew Jesus would be too much engaged with others to grant a private interview, while another may think that Nicodemus wished to avoid offending the Pharisees. Finally, another person may say, "It is my opinion that all these facts united in the mind of Nicodemus to cause him to approach Jesus at night." As a result, those who hold the mentioned opinions, might dispute in regard to them during their entire life, and allow temper to arise so as to make those who hold them bitter enemies, simply because their respective opinions would be concerning something which is not revealed, and, therefore, is not a matter of divine testimony.

Thus it is with the disputes which now exist in the religious world. Certain men have failed to distinguish between faith and opinion, because they have failed to consider testimony,

and the absence of testimony. As a result, they have intermingled faith and opinion to the confusion of themselves, and of all who have confided in them. What is worst of all, in the case of such men, is that they have been burdened with self-conceit, and have been ambitious to make a great name for themselves, or they have been too proud to acknowledge an error, and, thus, too proud to consider that they may have made a mistake. Such men form an opinion, and then often advocate and urge it to their own destruction, as well as to the destruction of those who follow them. Opinionism is, therefore, the ism, which, above all others, has made many professed followers of Christ a disgrace to their profession by reason of the divisions, strifes and contentions resulting from their followers.

What may we learn by considering the interview between Jesus and Nicodemus concerning the conditions of entrance into the kingdom of God? We may learn that entrance into that kingdom is not the result of a fleshly birth, but that it consists of a birth “of water and of the Spirit.” We may likewise learn that the spirit of man must be born of the Spirit of God, and that the spirit of man is a mystery, even as the wind is a mystery.

To what does the expression “born of water,” as recorded in the 5th verse of this chapter refer? The book named “Acts of the Apostles” informs us that it refers to water baptism for in that book we learn that those who became Christians, and, therefore, entered the kingdom of God (Colossians 1:13), were baptized in water.

May not the expression “born of water” refer to the natural birth? No; for the Savior said, “Except a man” (and not an unborn infant) “be born of water.” This settles that question. The Savior was talking to a man, and concerning a man, and not with reference to an unborn infant, when he said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

What does the expression, “kingdom of God,” as mentioned in the 3rd and 5th verses of this chapter, refer to? Mark 9:1 and Acts 1:8, when considered in the light of the second chapter of Acts, clearly indicate that the expression “kingdom of God,” as recorded in the mentioned verses, certainly refers to “the Church.” See Acts 2:47. The Church, mentioned in that scripture, is “the Church of God,” of which we read in Acts 20:28, and “the Church of God,” wherever it was established, was to that extent “the king-

dom of God.” The chief difference between the two expressions is in the difference between “called out” and “ruled.” The name “Church of God” means “the called out of God,” while the expression “kingdom of God” means “ruled of God.” Those who entered the Church entered the Kingdom, and those who entered the Kingdom entered the Church. The distinctive meaning of the word “church,” therefore, is in the idea of “separation,” while the distinctive meaning in the word “kingdom” is the idea of “rulership. “

What is referred to by the expression, “born of the Spirit”? The book of Acts informs us that the Holy Spirit spoke through the Apostles and others, also that those who were made believers by that which they heard from the Spirit, through inspired ones, and then, as believers, became obedient to the commands of the Spirit, as addressed to alien sinners, were thereby made new creatures. Then was fulfilled in them that which is recorded in Titus 3:5, which declares that God “saved” the obedient “by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” The expression, “washing of regeneration,” is only another form for “born of water,” while “renewing of the Holy Ghost” is only another form of expression for “born . . . of the Spirit.” Therefore, those who heard the words of the Holy Spirit, and so received them as to be renewed in thought, and feeling, and life, were certainly renewed by that Spirit, and were thus “born . . . of the Holy Ghost, “ or Holy Spirit. But all the expressions which we have just considered are summed up in the obedience rendered by those who became Christians, as their obedience is recorded in the book of Acts. That is to say, those who believed in Christ as the Son of God with all their hearts, who repented sincerely of all their sins, who humbly confessed their faith in Christ, and then were buried with Christ by baptism into death, calling on the name of the Lord, were certainly “born again,” were “born of water and of the Spirit,” and, therefore, they certainly entered into “the kingdom of God.”

Can any one enter the kingdom of God without being born again? No. The Savior said, “Ye must be born again.” That is what he meant by saying, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. “ Can any one be born again by any other method than the method of obedience set forth in Acts of Apostles? No. Any, and all, methods of obedience which are different from the obedience set forth in the book of Acts, are deviations from the divinely ordained method. Man cannot change the plan by which

we are born into the kingdom of nature, and he cannot change the plan by which the Lord has ordained that we shall be born into the kingdom of God. Those who force a birth into this world before the divinely ordained time are abortionists, and those who declare that mankind are born into the kingdom of God before God's appointed time, as indicated by the obedience he requires, are likewise abortionists. Those teachers are all religious abortionists, who presume to interfere with God's arrangements which he has ordained in his infinite wisdom, love, mercy, and goodness. The fleshly abortionist is a contemptible character, and a criminal, and the same is true of the religious abortionist, only in a manifold greater degree. Those who declare that persons are born into the kingdom of God, before they have fully complied with the divinely appointed conditions of that birth, deceive all who have confidence in them. As a result, they prevent all who confide in them from being born into God's kingdom, and turn them aside into sectarian republics, where they continue to deceive them with their sectarian rules.

What may we learn by considering the 8th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the Savior endeavored to convince Nicodemus, by an illustration, that he should not reject what he had heard simply because he did not understand it. He admitted the existence and motions of the wind, though he did not understand it, and, therefore, he should admit what the Savior had said to him about the spirit of man being born of the Spirit of God.

What use is commonly made of this 8th verse by certain religious sectarians? They use it to cover their mysterious ideas concerning conversion to Christ, and generally quote the last part of this verse thus: "So is every one . . . born of the Spirit." By omitting the words "that is," before the word "born," they indicate that the word "so" refers to the manner of the birth into the kingdom. But this is not the idea. The word "so" in that verse modifies the entire clause—"is every one that is born of the Spirit." This shows that the word "so," in this verse refers to the one who is born, and not to the manner of the birth. There is a great difference between saying, "So is every one that is born," and saying "So is every one . . . born." In the former declaration reference is made to the one who is born, while in the latter reference is made to the manner of being born.

Now the question arises, Who, or what, is it that is "born of the Spirit"? The 6th verse answers this question. It de-

clares, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In other words, the spirit of man is that which is born of the Spirit of God. When the Holy Spirit addresses the spirit, or mind, of man, through the word of truth, and the spirit of man submits to the Spirit of God so as to be renewed thereby, then the spirit of man is born of the Spirit of God. This being understood we can also understand that the Savior endeavored to teach Nicodemus that as the wind was a mystery so the spirit of man is a mystery. This being the idea, which the Savior endeavored to teach Nicodemus, we can understand that the mystery mentioned in this verse is concerning the spirit of man, and not concerning the manner of the new birth. Therefore, sectarians are wrong in the use they make of this 8th verse, for the manner of the birth of the spirit of man when he is brought into the kingdom of God is clearly set forth in the record given of the cases of conversion recorded in Acts of the Apostles.

But what shall we say to those who affirm that the translation of this verse is not correct, and that it should read thus: "The Spirit breathes where he pleases, and thou hearest his voice, but thou canst not tell whence he cometh, and whither he goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"? We should say to them that if they desire to translate this passage so as to make them confess that they do not know whence the Spirit of God comes, nor whither he goes, and that, in the new birth, man's spirit is born of a Spirit that they do not know whence he comes, nor whither he goes, they are welcome to such a translation! But the Apostle Peter wrote concerning the "Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." (1 Peter 1:12.) Therefore, we should prefer to avoid teaching, and, even intimating, that we do not understand whence that Spirit comes by which persons are renewed when they enter the kingdom of God.

But what shall we say when we are told that the Greek word here translated by the English word "wind" is found many times in the New Testament, and is translated by the word "Spirit" in every other instance, and that, therefore, it should be thus translated in this instance? We should inform them that the first meaning of the Greek word here translated by the English word "wind", is "wind, air in motion". This being true, the use of that word where it must be translated by the word "Spirit" is only secondary, and incidental. Finally, we should inform those who insist on leaving the word "wind" out of this translation, that if they desire a translation which compels them to confess that in conversion to Christ a sinner is born of "the Spirit", and,

yet, they do not understand whence that Spirit comes, nor whither he goes, they are welcome to it; but that those who read their New Testament aright understand that “the Spirit” of which sinners are born in conversion came down from heaven. See Acts 2:1-4; 1 Peter 1:12. This we should emphasize.

But this is not all. For if the new translation be adopted, then the spirit of the man who is born of the Holy Spirit is like the Holy Spirit in that he breathes where he pleases, and you hear his voice but cannot tell whence he comes nor whither he goes. But this is an absurdity; and yet it cannot be avoided except by ignoring the comparison introduced by the words “so is”.

How, then, should we treat this passage? We should consider that Nicodemus was in confusion because he did not understand the new doctrine which had been declared to him, and he was disposed to deny it because he did not understand it. Then the Savior proceeded to show him that he should not deny that the spirit of man could be born of the Spirit of God simply because he did not understand it, for he admitted the blowing of the wind, though he did not understand it. But Nicodemus was still disposed to doubt, and asked, “How can these things be?” In answering him the Savior said, “If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?” And here is another evidence that the old translation of the 8th verse is correct, for the wind is an earthly something, and its blowing is an earthly affair.

In conclusion I state that the plea of consistency in translating the Greek word “pneuma” is the only plea that can be made in behalf of the new translation, but this plea is overwhelmed by the well-grounded objections that can be urged against it. One of those objections is that those who make that translation before an audience, and those who hear it, cannot understand the advantage of it, nor gather its meaning with any degree of clearness. Most of those who adopt the translation quote the last part of it thus: “So is every one born of the Spirit,” thereby omitting two words of the text, and causing the adverb “so” to refer to the manner of the birth, which is a sectarian idea, and is a perversion of the text on that question. Therefore, the old translation should be accepted, and the “wind,” as mentioned in that translation, should be regarded as introduced to illustrate the spirit of man. The wind is a mystery, both in its existence, and in its operations, and so is the spirit of man a mystery

both in its existence and in its operations. This is the comparison, as introduced by the expression “so is,” and this permits us to understand the passage, while the new translation is meaningless and confusing.

But suppose some one would say, that “the wind cannot blow where it listeth, or pleaseth, because it has not any will of its own,” then what should we say? We should say that what is said about the wind blowing in the 8th verse of this chapter is accommodative, even as it is in every other instance. The wind has not the least power to blow at any time or place, for the blowing is the wind, and the wind is the blowing. Therefore, the criticism offered on this question is like all others that are urged against truth, namely, it is proved to be ill-founded as soon as it is fairly examined.

What may we say of Nicodemus, in view of the account given of him in this chapter? He was a representative of all religionists who profess to believe in Christ as “a teacher sent from God,” but are disposed to reject everything which Christ requires that they cannot understand the bearing of, and, at the same time, will admit the existence and outworking of mysteries in other directions. Many of these religionists reject water baptism because they cannot “see its value,” but will adopt an imaginary theory of the operation of the Holy Spirit, in the conversion of sinners, which neither they nor any one else can understand. All such religionists are lacking in faith and reverence toward God and Christ, and are victims of human conceit. As a rule, they do not know enough of the divine testimony to be possessed of faith and reverence, in a Godward direction, and, with the disposition of the genuine rationalist, they try to measure the appropriateness and the value of divine requirements by their own narrow, frail, uninformed, untrained powers of reason. As a result they reject what seems mysterious in divine revelation, while they accept any number of mysteries in other departments of thought and existence.

What may we learn by considering what is said in the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter? We may learn the bearing of the word “so” in the 8th verse, for here is a comparison introduced, by that word, between something that was “earthly” and something that is “heavenly.” We may also learn the value of faith in God's arrangement for ' man's salvation, both physically and spiritually. In the 21st chapter of the book named Numbers, we are informed that the Israelites sinned through unbelief, and that God punished them by sending among them poisonous serpents. After many had

been bitten and died, the others confessed their sin and asked Moses to pray for them. He did as they requested, and, then, the Lord told him to make a serpent of brass and place it on a pole, and proclaim in the camp of Israel, that whoever had been bitten by a serpent, should, when he would look on that serpent of brass, be healed. The record informs us, that the results were as Moses had proclaimed. Now we can understand the bearing of the comparison. As the Israelites could not see any value in looking upon a brazen serpent in order to be healed of a serpent's bite, so mankind would not be able to see how salvation will come to them by believing in Christ. Yet, looking upon a serpent of brass was God's arrangement for saving certain Israelites from physical death, and believing in Christ is God's arrangement for saving mankind from spiritual death.

What should we say to those who refer to these scriptures as evidence of salvation by faith only, or faith without obedience? We should say to them that the Israelites, who had been bitten by serpents, were not only required to believe that Moses had told them the truth in regard to their salvation, but they were required to show their faith by obeying the divine will in looking at the serpent of brass which he had commanded Moses to make and place on a pole. On the same principle mankind are not only required to believe in Christ, but they are required to show their faith by obeying his commands, "repent and be baptized," as set forth in Acts 2:38.

What do we find set forth in the 16th and 17th verses? We find mention of God's love, as made known in the gift of his Son for mankind, also mention of God's purpose in thus manifesting his love. Does the divine purpose, as here mentioned, imply, or, even intimate, that God will save mankind by faith only? No. Faith only, or faith without obedience, is dead. See James 2:14-26 and John 12:42, 43. And, mankind cannot be saved by a faith that is dead, but in order for them to be saved they must have a living, active, faith, which will lead them to do all that the Lord requires, and then rest satisfied, refusing to add to his requirements, or to suppose that they are not complete when all that they set forth is properly considered.

What may we find in the 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st verses of this chapter? We find a declaration concerning the justification of the believer, the condemnation of the disbeliever, the dishonesty of the evil doer; and the honesty of the right doer. Are there any exceptions to the declarations just mentioned?

Yes. There are some evil doers who think they are doing right, and desire to do right. These will come to the light that their deeds may be reprov'd if they are not right. The same is true of those who suspect that they are in error. But, as a rule, the effect of evil is to make its victims dishonest, and, as a result, it will make them cowards—moral cowards—so that they try to avoid the truth which will expose their evil doing. This is specially true of those who have accepted a false religious doctrine. Religious error seems to be a mental poison.

What is indicated by the 22nd, 23rd and 24th verses, when considered together? The indication is that for a period of time John the Baptist and Jesus were co-workers; that is, they both preached and baptized during a certain period. This being true those are in error who say that John's ministry was ended when he had baptized Jesus. The 23rd verse, by itself considered, indicates that immersion was practiced by John the Baptist, for it declares that he “was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there.”

What should we say to those who plead that “much water” was required to “accommodate the camels and asses on which many persons rode to John's baptizing”? We should inform them that John “was baptizing in Enon near to Salim because there was much water there,” but they contend that he was making provision for certain beasts of burden, and, for that reason, was at a place where there was much water. In other words, those who take that position contend that “because there was much water” at a certain place John went there to accommodate certain beasts of burden! Finally, we should say to all who make the mentioned contention that if they will read the New Testament in order to learn and do what it certainly sets forth, and not for the purpose of evading what it sets forth, they will be able to understand what it requires.

What is taught in the 29th verse? The teaching there is, that John the Baptist, as the friend of Jesus, was the friend of the bridegroom, and that his joy was fulfilled by reason of the voice of Jesus which he heard. Then the indication here is that as John the Baptist was only “the friend of the bridegroom,” certainly the Church, as the bride of Christ, should not be named after John, but after Christ. The bride should be called after her husband, and not after her husband's friend.

What is set forth in the 34th verse? That verse sets forth two declarations concerning Jesus. He is the one whom God sent

to speak his words, and to whom the Holy Spirit was given without measure, or limit. The Spirit was so abundantly bestowed on him that he had sufficient for his own words and work, likewise sufficient for him to impart unto his Apostles. The abundant supply of the Spirit which was bestowed upon him is referred to in Hebrews 1:9, which declares that God anointed Jesus with “the oil of gladness” above his “fellows,” which means above all others.

Does the last verse of this chapter imply that those who believe in Christ, so fully that they are acceptable to God, are really partakers of eternal life at once, or while they are here in this world? This verse so implies, and the same is implied in 1 John 3:1, 2. The Apostle John says, “Now are we the sons of God.” This being true of all Christians we are partakers of the promise of eternal life, and, in that sense, we have “everlasting life.”

CHAPTER IV

Of what do we read in this chapter? Mention is made here of the reason that Jesus left one district of country and went into another, likewise that he did not baptize, except by the hands of his disciples. Next we find mention of the Savior's need to go through Samaria, of the fact that he went through a certain city of Samaria, and of an interview which he had there with a certain woman, and of the results of that interview. Next we learn that Jesus went into a district named “Galilee,” and that the people of that district “received him” because of the miracles that he had done “at Jerusalem.” The chapter is ended with an account of the Savior performing a miracle in healing a certain nobleman's son, and of the results of that miracle on the father, and other home folks, of that son.

What is implied by the 2nd verse of this chapter? It implies that Jesus did not baptize any one with his own hands, but that his disciples did the baptizing for him. The Greek text, of this verse, clearly indicates that the meaning just mentioned is the only meaning which it can have. In view of this what should we say to those who have adopted the opinion that Jesus did, with his own hands, baptize his disciples but did not personally baptize any others? We should tell them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.”

But suppose they make a hobby of their erroneous idea, and disturb the church with it, then what? They should be admonished to refrain from so doing, as the mentioned verse does not set forth a practical question, and, for that reason,

should not be contended for. If they persist in contending for it they should be dealt with as heretics. See Titus 3:10, 11. On the same principle all other persistent errorists should be dealt with. They are unruly.

What may we say of the word “water” as used by the Savior in the 10th and 14th verses of this chapter? That word is used in a figurative sense in those verses, as is clearly indicated in chapter 7:38, 39. The Bible reader should recollect these scriptures because the question sometimes arises whether the word “water,” is ever used in the New Testament in any sense except that which is literal. Sectarians who try to entangle a disciple of Christ sometimes ask that question, and those who desire to be always right should be prepared for them.

How was it that the woman to whom the Savior spoke did not have any husband, though she evidently had a man with whom she consorted as if he were her husband? As the Savior told her to call her “husband,” and then said to the woman, he “is not thy husband,” we must conclude that he first spoke to her of “husband” in the real, or fleshly sense, and then spoke of him in the legal sense.

What mountain is referred to in the expression “this mountain,” as recorded in the 20th and 21st verses? The name “Samaria” Means “watch mountain,” but whether reference in the mentioned verses was made to the name “Samaria” or to some mountain near the city of Samaria we are not informed.

When and how did the Samaritans begin their existence as a separate people? The 17th chapter of the 2nd book of Kings answers that question, and every reader of the New Testament should know what that answer is. By reading the mentioned chapter we may learn that the Samaritans were of heathen origin, but were taught somewhat in regard to the Jewish religion. The record before us concerning the Samaritan woman, with whom the Savior had an interview, indicates that the Samaritans, as a people, had learned much truth from the Jewish people.

What is the bearing of the 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter? The bearing of those verses is to this effect: The Jews had a religious advantage over the Samaritans because God's promise of salvation was through them, yet the time would come, and was then near at hand, when true worshipers would be determined by character, and not by place of worship. The Jews had the advantage because God had said

to their father Abraham, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:3.) Yet the Savior knew that he would soon give to his Apostles the commission to preach the Gospel to all nations, and that thenceforth Jerusalem would not be the only acceptable place of worship for Jews, and that Gentiles as well as Jews, might worship God in all places where they would approach God in spirit and in truth. The expression "in spirit and in truth," cannot mean more nor less than spiritually and truly, and, thus, that all acceptable worship in the Gospel Age must be offered with the right disposition and in the right manner. The Gospel teachings inform us in regard to both the spirit and form of acceptable worship.

What is referred to in the 35th, 36th, 37th and 38th verses? In those verses reference is made to the readiness among mankind for acceptance of the Gospel, as indicated by the disposition of the woman of Samaria, and many other Samaritans, in regard to the Savior's teaching, and what advantage Gospel preachers would have by reason of that disposition as it then existed in many persons.

What is suggested by the difference between the Samaritans and the Jews at Jerusalem in regard to the Savior's teaching? The difference between those who were in religious darkness because they did not have opportunity for light, and those who were in darkness because they had rejected light, is suggested. The Samaritans were of the former class, and the Jews of Jerusalem were of the latter class. The Samaritans were in error through unavoidable ignorance, while the perverse Jews were in error through wilful ignorance. The Samaritans who believed in Christ represent those who now are innocently wrong, while the Jews who rejected him represent those who are perversely wrong. Humble believers among sectarian denominations are specimens of the former class, while professed disciples who have gone after popularity are specimens of the latter class. Those who make up the former class will accept the Gospel in its fulness when made known to them, while those who make up the latter class despise the fulness of the Gospel. The former class consists of persons who regard the uncompromising Gospel preacher as their friend, while the latter class consists of persons who seem to regard the uncompromising Gospel preacher as their enemy.

What may we learn by considering the disposition of the Galileans toward the Savior? They showed that they were favorably disposed toward him, and showed that they had

not sinned against light, as most of the leading Jews at Jerusalem had sinned.

What may we say of the Savior's journeys as they have been thus far indicated in this record? Jesus went from the Jordan where he was baptized into Galilee, and there, at a place called Cana, he was at a certain marriage. Then he went to Jerusalem and cleansed the temple of certain characters.

While at Jerusalem he had an interview with a certain ruler named Nicodemus. After that he left Jerusalem and went into the land of Judea, tarried, and baptized many—by the hands of his disciples. Next he left Judea and went into Galilee, and in order to do so, in going northward ' he needed to go through Samaria. While in Samaria he had an interview with a certain woman, and led her with many other Samaritans to believe on him. After that he went on northward into Galilee, and was favorably received. While he was there he healed a certain nobleman's son.

CHAPTER V

Of what are Bible readers informed in the chapter that is now before us? We are, first, informed of the fact that there was a certain feast of the Jews, that Jesus went to Jerusalem, that a certain impotent man was there at a certain pool, that Jesus healed him on the sabbath day' and that certain Jews tried to kill him because of what he had done. Then we learn that Jesus spoke to them of God as his Father, and that, on that account, they tried more earnestly to kill him because, as they said ' "he not only had broken the law, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." Next we learn that Jesus made a response to the Jews who tried to slay him, and in that response stated his relationship to his Father, also what the Father had committed to him, and what the results of honoring him, and hearing his voice, would be. Next we read concerning the resurrection of both the good and the evil, and then a statement is made of the dependence of Jesus on his Father, after which we find mention of John the Baptist as a witness of Jesus, and that the works of Jesus would be a greater witness than John was. Mention of searching the Scriptures is next made, also the question of receiving honor from men, and the result thereof in those whom he addressed. The chapter is ended with certain statements in regard to the relationship of the writings of Moses to Jesus, and the effect which believing the writings of Moses would have had on the Jews.

What use may advocates of the Gospel make of the fact that

a record is given in this chapter of a certain pool of water at Jerusalem? We may use this part of John's record to show that the converts on the day of Pentecost, mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter, could have been baptized at Jerusalem.

What was intended to be impressed by the record here given of the fact that the first one who stepped into the water of the pool of Bethesda was healed? We are not informed, but the importance of promptness is indicated, and, therefore, the value of prompt obedience to the Gospel is intimated.

What may we say of the disposition of the Jews who tried to slay the Savior because he had healed a man on the sabbath day, and because he declared himself to be "the Son of God"? To say the least, they were very unreasonable, for they did not consider the good that was done to the "impotent man," nor that the one who was capable of healing a man who had been afflicted thirty-eight years must have been truthful.

Does the 24th verse teach that mankind can be saved by believing in Christ without obeying the Gospel? No. Paul informs us that Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8, 9.) This implies that the belief which saves is the belief which leads to obedience, likewise that obedience to Christ must be rendered, and not obedience to some doctrine that Christ never authorized.

Do the 25th and 28th verses of this chapter refer to resurrection from the death of the body? The word "voice," as found in those verses, indicates that it means the same that it does in I Thessalonians 4:16, where it certainly refers to the dead bodies of the saints which will be raised from the dead. The Savior knew that he would do "greater works" than those he had done at the time he spoke the words that are here recorded. See 20th verse of this chapter. Knowing this he expressed what is declared in the 25th verse, and a record of its fulfillment is found in Matthew 9:18, 23-25; Luke 7:11-15; John 11:1-44. The word "voice," as recorded in chapter 11:43, is a confirmation of the conclusion just expressed. This conclusion is that the 25th verse of this chapter referred to the resurrection of a certain ruler's daughter, of a certain's widow's son, and of a certain man named Lazarus, who lived at a place named Bethany, but that the 28th verse of this chapter refers to the final resurrection of the dead. This verse makes mention of "all that are in the graves," and this implies that "all" who will be in their graves when the time shall come for the Savior to call them forth will be raised. See 1 Corinthians 15:22.

What should we say to those who advocate the idea that the 25th verse of this chapter refers to the raising of those to spiritual life who are “dead” in trespasses and sins? We should say that such an idea is the result of an inference, or an interpretation, but is not the result of considering with care the divine testimony as indicated by the word “voice,” recorded in the several scriptures which have been mentioned as bearing on the question. See chapter 11:43; 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Besides, the expressions “the dead,” and “shall live,” as recorded in the 25th verse, bear further testimony to the conclusion which has been stated in regard to this subject. The context in which those expressions are here found do not indicate, nor even intimate, that they should be used with reference to the preaching of the Gospel and its results here in this world.

What is suggested by the 30th verse of this chapter? The great difference between Jesus, when on earth, and many of his professed followers now on earth, is suggested. Of himself he could “do nothing”; that is ' he could not of himself do anything. But multitudes of his professed followers can do many things. They can establish churches which are not authorized of Christ, and organize many helping societies. They can devise “ways and means” to raise money, and, even constitute religious officers not mentioned in the Bible. Christ was helpless, except as his Father made a revelation to him, but those of his professed followers that are here mentioned, are helpful, and can help each other to do anything that may occur to them as pleasing to mankind. The reason of this difference is stated by the Savior in these words: “Because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me.” He was limited to his Father's will, but those of whom mention is made, in this connection, seek to please themselves, and others, by arranging that which they think will be pleasing and popular.

What is indicated in the 31st verse? It is explained by the 32nd verse, and, especially, by chapter 12:44. In that verse Jesus declared that belief in him does not end with him, but reaches to the Father. So in the 31st and 32nd verses of this chapter Jesus declared that the testimony he bore of himself was not true if it should end with him. But as it did not end with him it was true. See chapter 8:14. Therefore, the only sense in which his testimony concerning himself could be false would be if it ended with him, and if his Father would not confirm it. But as his Father did confirm it there could not be any question in regard to its correctness.

What “John” is referred to in the 33rd and 36th verses of this chapter? John the Baptist. See chapter 1:29-35.

What is indicated by the word “shape” in the last of the 37th verse? That God has a form or “shape” is by that word indicated, and this indication is in harmony with all else that is recorded in the Bible concerning him. God is, not a formless being “without body or parts,” as certain human creeds record, but is the Being after whose form man is patterned. This is plainly declared in Genesis 1:26, 27, and plainly implied in Hebrews 1:3.

And what may we learn by considering the 38th verse? This verse suggests what we find in chapter 8:47, and both of these verses condemn all persons who profess to believe in Christ yet reject a part of his words. To believe in Christ aright impels those who thus believe to accept without doubt or discount all that he commands and forbids, promises and threatens. Such belief also impels to a wholehearted acceptance of all that Christ fulfilled, and all that he endorsed.

What may we say of the 39th verse? As recorded in the Common Version of the Sacred Text it sets forth a command to “search the Scriptures,” and this command is in harmony with all else that bears on the same subject. But certain later versions translate the first part of this verse thus: “You search the Scriptures,” thereby indicating that the Savior simply referred to the fact that the Jews, whom he was addressing, really did search the Scriptures. This difference in translation should prevent preachers. from taking the first part of this verse as a command to search the Scriptures, as they might be in error. We cannot be too careful to obtain the exact idea in every text of God's Word, and thus cannot be too careful to avoid every shade of error in applying it.

What of the 40th verse? There were many reasons why those whom the Savior addressed, personally, when he was on earth in human form, did not come to him, but those reasons were all summed up in the expression “will not.” The same is yet true.

What is indicated by the 43rd verse? The indication is that mankind were the same in disposition when Christ was on earth, in person, as they are now. Then they rejected their best friend and were disposed to follow a deceiver. Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be till the end of time.

And what of the 44th verse? It informs us why mankind are not now disposed to become Christians, and thus explains why

those who preach the Gospel faithfully do not behold many persons yielding to Christ. According to the Savior's declaration, in the verse before us, it is impossible for any one to believe in Christ who receives honor from men, and seeks not the honor which comes from God only. This reveals the sham faith of all who profess to believe in Christ, but, for the sake of popularity, join popular churches. That declaration reveals also the sham faith of all who profess to believe in Christ, yet refuse to unite with the New Testament Church because it is unpopular.

What may we learn by considering the 45th, 46th and 47th verses? These verses inform us that the Jews, who lived while the Jewish law was in force, will be measured, before God, in the last day, by the writings of Moses. This suggests that all Jews and Gentiles, of the Gospel Age, will be measured before God in the final judgment, by the words of our Savior. See chapter 12:48. On this principle all classes of mankind will be finally judged. Chapter 15:22, 24 give us further information on this subject. "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Luke 12:48.) This also shows that God holds mankind responsible according to the light they are permitted to enjoy.

CHAPTER VI

Of what are Bible readers informed in this division of the Apostle John's writings? We are first informed with reference to whither Jesus went, and the multitude that followed him ' also that a passover of the Jews was soon to be held. Next we read that Jesus fed the multitude that followed him, and of the effect of the miracle he wrought in so doing. Then we are informed of the disposition of certain persons to make him a king, and of the fact that he left them, and that he afterwards walked to his disciples on the water when they were at sea in a storm. After this we read of the absence of Jesus and his disciples from "the people," at a certain place, and that when "the people" had followed him and found him elsewhere, they inquired when he came to that place, and that he gave them a chiding answer in regard to their reason for seeking him. Next we read of an interview between Jesus and those he had chided, in which he set forth many important truths concerning himself, and which resulted in causing many of those to whom he spoke to leave him. The chapter is ended with a record of an interview that Jesus held with his disciples ' in which Simon Peter expressed his confidence in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

What special lesson may we learn by considering the record given in the first part of this chapter in regard to the miraculous feeding of a multitude? We may learn by the 12th verse of this record that Christ's disciples should practice economy even in the midst of plenty. The lesson here set forth requires that all Christians shall be economical in their personal and family and business expenses, also that all churches of Christ should practice economy. This will require them to purchase lots and build meeting houses when they cannot otherwise secure them by a more economical plan.

What kind of a king did certain Jews desire to make of Jesus? A temporal or earthly king. Was that desire of those Jews the result of conviction, or of impulse that was the outgrowth of ignorance? It was impulse, for when Jesus had expressed himself, on certain other questions, to those very persons who desired to make him a king, they turned from him, and did not walk any more with him.

What is revealed in the 26th verse? A revelation is therein made, in regard to human nature, which indicates that it is the same in all ages. Many persons followed the Savior, for a time, when he was, personally, on earth, because of earthly advantage, and many persons are now disposed to profess faith in Christ because of such advantage.

What is set forth in the 28th and 29th verses, taken together? We learn by taking these verses together that believing in Christ is declared to be "the work of God." In view of this, what may we say of those who try to separate faith in Christ from the works that God has ordained? They do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God."

What may we safely conclude from all that Jesus said to certain Jews, as recorded in this chapter, in regard to himself as "the bread of life"? We may conclude, and should conclude, that he intended to teach that as material bread was divinely ordained to sustain physical life, so he was ordained of God to give and sustain spiritual life.

What is specially indicated in the 35th verse of this chapter? That all restless church members, who are not satisfied with Christ's arrangements for worship and work, are sham believers, is here indicated. It is impossible for true believers to hunger or thirst for humanisms in religion.

In view of the 38th verse, which declares that Jesus came to do the will of his Father, what may we say of those who

teach that Jesus is “the very and eternal God, coequal with the Father”? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.”

What may we learn by considering the 44th and 45th verses of this division of the Apostle John's writings? We may learn that the divinely arranged power to “draw” mankind to Christ consists of the divinely ordained teaching. The most important part of that teaching is the doctrine of the cross of Christ. See chapter 12:32, 33. In view of such declarations in regard to drawing mankind to Christ, what should we say to those who teach that instrumental music is necessary in order to draw alien sinners to their Savior? We should say that they certainly do not believe what the Savior says on this subject.

In what sense is the statement true, that he that believes on Christ “hath everlasting life”? It is true in the sense of a promise. See Romans 6:22.

In what sense is the “flesh” of Jesus “the living bread which came down from heaven”? The last part of the 58th verse informs us that Jesus would give his “flesh” “for the life of the world.” This he did when in his “flesh” he suffered death on the cross. As “the word of God” he came down from heaven, and took upon himself a body of flesh in which to suffer for mankind, and make such an offering as would open up the way of life for a sinful world. God gives to mankind physical life by the death of a part of the vegetable and of the animal kingdoms, and we should not draw back from the doctrine that he proposes to give to mankind eternal life through the death of a human body possessed by a divine being. This brings us to the 57th verse, in which Jesus declares, “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me even he shall live by me.” In this declaration we find that Jesus illustrates our life by him, and the illustration he gives is the fact that he lives by the Father.

What is taught in the 63rd verse? The same that is taught in chapter 12:50. In the former verse the words of Jesus are declared to be “life,” and in the latter God's commandment is declared to be “life.” The explanation is that “life” will begin to those who obey the words of Christ, which Words are the commandments of the Father. See chapter 12:48, 49.

In what sense are the “words” of Christ “Spirit”? They are not matter, nor material in their nature, and for this reason they belong to the domain of that which is “spirit” or spiritual.

What is indicated in the 65th verse of this division of John's writings? The same that is indicated in the 44th and 45th verses of this chapter. When God draws a person to Christ by his teaching in his word, then he gives to that person the power to become Christ's follower, and then is fulfilled the 12th verse of the first chapter of this record.

What may we learn by considering the last part of this chapter? We may learn that the Savior, while on earth in person, had "many" disciples who were not true to him, even as he now has "many" of that kind. They would listen to some parts of his teachings, but become offended when they heard other parts of it, and even turned away from him. The same is true now. What disposition will all true disciples of Christ show toward him at all times, and in all circumstances? We should show the disposition expressed by the Apostle Peter when Jesus asked him and his brother Apostles whether they would also go away. He answered by asking, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" thereby implying that Jesus was the only one to whom he could go. Thus all Christians should feel in regard to Christ, and the Church of Christ. If we should think of leaving Christ, then to whom should we go? If we should think of leaving the Church of Christ, to what shall we go?

CHAPTER VII

What are the outlines of thought in the record of truth given in this chapter? First of all mention is made of the fact that Jesus walked in Galilee, and the reason why he did not walk in Judea. Then we find a record of an interview between Jesus and his brethren, and then of the fact that he went to Jerusalem and taught in the temple, and this is followed by a record of what he taught. An interview between Jesus and the gainsaying people who heard him in the temple is next recorded. After this we find a record of other teaching that he did, and of the fact that an effort was made to lay hands on him. The chapter is ended with a record of remarks made by certain Jews as a result of the officers, who were sent to take him, failing to do so.

What is indicated by the record here given in the first of this chapter of an interview between Jesus and his brethren? That is indicated that is often seen among mankind in every generation, namely, a man is sometimes not known by his own relatives. He may be so good that they will not know him, or he may be so bad that they cannot know him.

And what may we say of the 7th verse? It sets forth one rea-

son why the Jews hated the Savior. Are preachers of Christ ever hated because they testify against the evil works of mankind? They are, and the more effective they become in exposing evil the more they are hated by many evil workers.

What may we learn by considering the division of the people concerning Christ? We may learn that even Jesus, who spoke as man had never been enabled to speak, could not convince all who heard him of the truth of what he said, likewise that many decided against him simply because he reproved their errors.

What may we learn by considering the 17th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the doctrine which Jesus taught proclaims its own origin, whenever it is tested, by making of it a practical demonstration. If the moral teachings of Jesus are practically applied, they will show that they are superhuman, and even divine. Take, for instance, that which is commonly designated "the golden rule." Whoever will practice it in all departments of life will understand that it is a divine doctrine.

And what may we say of the 18th verse of this chapter? It should be impressed on the mind of every one, especially on the mind of every one who is high in self-esteem. It is still true that "he that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory."

And what of the 24th verse? It shows that Christ does not forbid his people to pass judgment on their fellow mortals, but only forbids judging "according to appearance." On the contrary, he commands them to judge "righteous judgment."

Why did not the Jews, who tried to take Jesus, lay hands on him? The 30th verse informs us that it was "because his hour was not yet come."

What may we learn by considering the 38th and 39th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit that should come upon his chosen ones under the figure of "rivers of living water." We may likewise learn that the divine purpose was that the Holy Spirit should not be given as "rivers of living water" till after Jesus should be glorified.

Did the Lord never raise a prophet out of Galilee? See 2 Kings 14:25. Jonah was of the city of Gathhepher, which was of the land of Zebulun, and thus a part of Galilee. This being true, the Jews who spoke to Nicodemus on that subject should not have been so very sure about Galilee.

CHAPTER VIII

Of what do we read in this chapter of John's record? We read first of the fact that Jesus went to the Mount of Olives the evening of the events mentioned in the preceding chapter, and, next, that early the following morning he went into the temple and taught. Then we read of a woman who was charged with adultery, and of what the Savior said and did with reference to her. The remainder of the chapter sets forth a record of several interviews which Jesus had with gainsaying Jews.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the woman who was brought before Jesus charged with adultery? We may learn that he was master of the occasion, for he showed that he knew the life of each accuser of the mentioned woman, and knew how to treat them all.

What should we say to those who intimate that the Savior endorsed the conduct of the woman who was brought before him? We should say that they fail to consider that the Savior indirectly charged her with sin, and plainly told her to it sin no more." He was not in the position of a judge. (See 15th verse of this chapter.) Therefore, he would not condemn the woman who was brought before him charged with a certain crime.

How can we reconcile the 19th verse of this chapter with the 28th verse of the preceding chapter? We can do so only by considering the difference between the earthward and the Godward relationship of Jesus. In the 27th verse of the preceding chapter we learn that certain Jews said of Jesus, "We know this man, whence he is." This they said because they knew his earthward relationship, and they thought that he could not be the "Christ" because they knew him. His answer to them then was according to that view of him which they were, at that time, considering. But in the 19th verse of the chapter now under examination the Savior answered the Jews with reference to his relationship to God. Thus they knew him, yet did not know him. They knew him in one relationship, but did not know him in another. The same is now true among mankind. We sometimes know a man in one relationship, but not in another.

What kind of freedom did Jesus refer to when he said, in the 32nd verse, "the truth shall make you free"? The same that Paul referred to when he used the expression, "free from sin," in Romans 6:18. This is further evident by the Savior's declarations in the 34th verse of this chapter.

In what sense is the word “hear” used in the last part of the 43rd verse? It is used in the sense of understand. They did not understand, or grasp, the meaning of his words, and, as a result, his entire speech was not understood by them.

What may we say of the 47th verse? It sets forth truths that are of universal application. All who are “of God” are ready and willing to hear “God's words,” and those, especially those religious persons who “are not of God,” are not willing to hear “God's words.” In proportion as mankind are right, they are disposed to learn what is right.

What may we learn by considering the disposition of the Jews who are mentioned in this chapter? They charged Jesus with bearing record, or witness, that “is not true” also that he was a “Samaritan” and had a “devil,” and, finally, they took up “stones to cast at him.” In view of this, should those who closely imitate the Savior in teaching and reproving be surprised if they should be called by unhandsome names? No. But they should remember Matthew 10:25. “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household.”

CHAPTER IX

Of what do we read in this chapter? We read of a man who was born blind, of the fact that Jesus gave him sight, and of consequent interviews which Jesus had with certain Jews.

What may we say of the question recorded in the 2nd verse of this chapter? It is about as reasonable as much that is now found in human systems of religion. That a man could sin before he was born is about like the idea that a man could be condemned to everlasting punishment, or be ordained to everlasting life, before he was born.

Could not Jesus have given sight to the blind man mentioned in this chapter without putting clay on his eyes, and then commanding him to wash in a certain pool? The last part of Mark 10th chapter indicates that he could, but, in this instance, he saw fit to make clay, anoint the eyes of the blind man with it, and then told him to wash in a certain pool. If this blind man had decided to wash in some other pool, would his eyes have been opened? We are not informed, but the record indicates that the blind man was too much interested in his own welfare to try experiments. What should this suggest to all who wish to be saved from spiritual blindness? The suggestion is that they should not risk any experiments, but should do exactly as the Lord commands them to do.

What may we learn by considering the critical disposition shown by the Jews who are mentioned in this chapter? Those Jews showed that they were disposed to examine with care every vestige of evidence that they could find in regard to the miracle here recorded, in order to avoid admitting it. What bearing has this fact on the declaration of Jesus that he was the son of David? It shows that if any defect in his record had existed, then the critical Jews who were at that time on earth would certainly have found it. In other words, if the mother of Jesus had not been of the descendants of David, the Jews who opposed Jesus would have discovered it, and would have used it against him.

What may we learn by reading the 31st verse? The truth thereby revealed is that a man must be in harmony with the will of God in order for God to hear him. But, does this verse teach that those who believe in Christ, repent of their sins, and confess their faith, must not pray till after their baptism? No. It does not touch their case. They are worshipers of God, and have commenced to do his will. Besides, the fact that Saul of Tarsus prayed before he was baptized, and that the Lord acknowledged that he prayed, should be sufficient to convince all Bible readers that it is not wrong for those to pray who believe in Christ, repent of their sins, confess their faith and intend to be baptized. Moreover, the question arises, whether it is possible for any sinner to be truly penitent who does not pray as did the publican—“God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” See Luke 18:13.

What is set forth in the 39th verse? A two-fold meaning of the word “see” is therein recorded. Jesus came that those who were physically blind might receive physical sight, and that those who thought that they had spiritual sight, and were too proud to accept the Savior's teachings, might be made blind by being confused in regard to his teachings.

And what may we say of the last verse of this chapter? It reveals that mankind are, in heaven's sight, held accountable according to the light which they pretend to have. The reason for this is evident, for that which mankind pretend to know determines their willingness or unwillingness to learn that which Jesus offers them. The conceited Jews, who were proud of their learning, were the worst opposers of the Savior while he was on earth; and the conceited sectarians who are proud of their learning are now the most unreasonable opposers of his Gospel in some of its requirements.

In the light of Luke 12:48; John 15:22, 24, and the last verse of the chapter now before us, mankind are responsible be-

fore God according to all that they know, and all that they have a fair opportunity of knowing, and all that they pretend to know. In view of this, all who have come to the years of responsibility should fear and tremble before God.

CHAPTER X

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of a parable of a sheepfold, and shepherd, and sheep, which is followed by an explanation. Next we are informed of a division among Jews who had heard Christ's teaching in regard to the sheepfold, of what some of them said to him and what he said to them; then that certain Jews were about to stone him, and what he said to them, also the answer they gave him, which is followed by his answer to them. Next we find a record of the fact that they sought to take him, that he escaped from them and went beyond Jordan. The record informs us that many resorted to him where he went, and many believed on him there.

What may we learn by considering the parable recorded in the first part of this chapter? We may learn what the Savior declared in his explanation of it. The explanation he gave begins with the 7th verse and ends with the 18th. In Ezekiel 34:1-22 we find a description of the false shepherds, and, then, in the 23rd verse and onward to the close of that chapter we find a prophecy concerning the true shepherd, and a poetic description of the condition of the Jewish people as the divine flock under God's care. In the light of that chapter we can understand who are meant by the expression "thieves and robbers". In his explanation, as here given, the Savior contrasted himself, as the "good shepherd", with "thieves and robbers", and with "hirelings". Likewise he spoke of himself as "the door of the sheep", and thus as the one by whom the sheep had entered into the sheepfold, as it then existed. This is explained by chapter 14:6. Mankind enter the sheepfold—the domain of the special care of the true Shepherd—by obeying his word. But what is meant by the words, "shall go in and out and find pasture"? These words refer to the general safety of a flock under a good shepherd's care. A flock while under such care is safe at all times. This illustrates the safe condition of the Church at all times under the good Shepherd's care. See 1 Corinthians 10:13. The expression "go in and out" does not refer to going in and out of the Church, but refers to the Church going anywhere among mankind that the good Shepherd directs or leads.

What is referred to by the expression “other sheep”, as found in the 16th verse? See Acts 18:9, 10; Ephesians 2:10-18. The Lord, who knew the hearts of the Corinthians, understood that many were in that city who would obey the Gospel when they would have an opportunity; and to the Ephesians Paul declared that Gentiles had been made of one religious people with the Jews by their obedience to the gospel of Christ. All this ' when taken together, shows that the expression “other sheep” referred to Gentiles who would obey the Gospel when it would be made known to them. Here we are plainly told what the word “sheepfold” means in the parable, and in the Savior's explanation as given to the close of the 15th verse. For in the 16th verse he says, “Other sheep have I which are not of this fold.” Those other sheep were, and are, Gentiles who would become true followers of Christ, and this implies that those who were then in what he designated “this fold” were his Jewish disciples who were true to him and this means his Apostles, except Judas Iscariot. See chapter 17:11,12. The 26th to 29th verses of this chapter confirm this conclusion.

What is the explanation of the 34th and 35th verses? Exodus 4:16; 7:1,2 give us the explanation that we need. Those scriptures taken together show that the word “God”, when used with reference to men, was applied in the sense of “ instead of “. In view of this, what may we say of those who teach that every human being partly consists of an embryonic God, and refer to the 34th and 35th verses of this chapter as a justification of such teaching? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” The Savior used the word “gods” with reference to inspired men, and not with reference to mankind generally. Satan said to our mother Eve, that those who would eat of a certain tree should be “as gods”. (Genesis 3:5.) That doctrine of Satan is closely related to the teaching of those who now say that mankind are “gods” by nature.

What is indicated in the 37th and 38th verses? The fairness of truth is thereby indicated. The Savior knew himself, but did not ask any one to believe in him because of what he said of himself. On the contrary, he told them not to believe on him if he did not do “the works” of his “Father”. This illustrates the fairness of truth. Moses gave an illustration thereof, as recorded in Numbers 16:29,30. Elijah did the same, as we learn by reading 1 Kings 18:21. In chapter 3:21 we learn more on the same subject. The effect of truth is to beget fairness in every mind and heart in which

it dwells, and the effect of error is just the opposite. Therefore truth inclines those who hold it to make fair propositions to their fellow mortals, while error inclines them to deal in subterfuges and evasions.

CHAPTER XI

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of a man named Lazarus, and of his sisters, also of the death of Lazarus. Then we are informed of the resurrection of Lazarus by the power of God manifested through the Lord Jesus. Next we are informed of the different dispositions shown by different classes of Jews who learned that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead.

What may we learn by considering the 39th verse of this chapter? We may learn that when Jesus was about to raise Lazarus from the dead he spoke to those who were present, saying, "Take ye away the stone." By thus speaking he commanded them to take away the stone that was upon the cave where the dead man's body had been laid. This indicates that though a miracle was about to be performed, yet those who were present, on the occasion, were required to do something toward the end in view. And this suggests that all of Christ's followers are required to do their part in every good work, and that they should not expect Christ to do what they can do for themselves. Moreover, we should take away everything that hinders the progress of the Gospel to the utmost that we can. The chief hindrances are generally in our own minds and hearts and lives. Such hindrances are under our own control, and we should be careful to discard them at all times.

What may we conclude in regard to the disposition of those Jews who "took counsel" to put Jesus to death because of the effect that his miracle, in the case of Lazarus, had on some who heard of it, and because they feared the effect on others of his other miracles? They hated him without a cause. See chapter 15:25. Is that disposition still among mankind? It is. There are multitudes who hate all who are better than themselves, or have more influence for good than themselves.

What may we say of the prophecy of Caiaphas, the high priest, as recorded in the 49th and 50th verses? It was an inspired prophecy, and illustrates God's power to use a man to speak his truth contrary to that man's own will, or knowledge. The same kind of power was manifested in the use made of

Balaam, who was constrained to bless when his purpose was to curse. See Numbers 23rd and 24th chapters. What do such instances of God's power indicate? They indicate verbal inspiration, and show the mistake of those who teach that inspired men were free to use their own words in setting forth the thoughts that God gave to them by the Holy Spirit. The erroneousness of such teaching is further manifest by the record given of men who spoke in languages which they had never learned. Certainly they did not choose their own words.

CHAPTER XII

And what may we learn by considering the chapter now before us? We may learn that the outlines of it are that a supper was made for Jesus at a place called Bethany, and of certain events connected with the occasion. Then we learn of the purpose of certain "chief priests" to kill Lazarus, and the reason they had for such a purpose. Next we learn of that which was done when Jesus was on his way from Bethany to Jerusalem to attend a certain feast of the Jews, also of the faith which the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead produced in many persons, and of the effect which their faith had on "the Pharisees." Mention is then made of certain Greeks, and of their wish to see Jesus, also of that which Jesus said when their wish to see him was reported to him. The fact that Jesus prayed, and that "a voice from heaven" came in response to his prayer, we find next recorded, also a statement of the impressions that the mentioned voice made on those who were with Jesus at that time. The remainder of the chapter sets forth several speeches that Jesus made concerning himself and his Father, and the salvation of the obedient, and the reason for the condemnation of the disobedient. In connection with these speeches we find a quotation from Isaiah in regard to the reason why the unbelieving Jews persisted in their unbelief.

What may we say of the account given in the first part of this chapter of Judas Iscariot? It indicates that he was a hypocrite. Did not Jesus know Judas? Certainly he did. See chapter 6:70. Why then did Jesus choose such a man to be one of his disciples? That which Judas did shows the reason. God's plan had need for such a man.

Why is it that "the poor" will always be with the disciples? Some people are so poor that they are objects of charity because they are not capable of managing their affairs so as to take care of themselves, and others are poor because they meet with misfortunes which overwhelm them.

What is indicated by the 10th, 11th and 19th verses of this chapter concerning the disposition of the “chief priests,” and of “the Pharisees”? The indications are that they were filled with jealousy and hatred because they could not entirely prevent the people from believing on Jesus. Is that disposition still cherished by some persons who are opposed to the gospel of Christ? Yes, it is cherished by all who are really sectarians in religion. They are vexed, and even filled with hatred, when they behold persons obeying the Gospel in its fullness, live in harmony with it, and exert a great influence for good. But not all who are members of sectarian churches are really sectarians at heart. Some of the members of sectarian churches are better than the creeds of such churches are.

What is referred to in the 24th verse? The preceding verse indicates that reference was made to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The idea is that as it is necessary for a grain of wheat to be put into the ground and die in order to bring forth fruit, so it would be necessary for Christ to die and be buried in order for him to be raised and bring forth fruit in saving mankind.

And what may we say of the word “life” in the 25th verse? That word is therein used in a two-fold sense, namely, in regard to this world, and the world to come. But why should any one be required to “hate” his life in this world in order to be finally saved? All those who suffered martyrdom implied that they despised, or hated, this life, when compared with the life to come, because they consented to give up this life in order to be sure of eternal life.

And what is referred to in the 31st verse? Hebrews 2:14, 15 give us information on this subject. So does 2 Timothy 1:10. Before Christ's death, burial and resurrection, the fear of death held even the best of mankind in bondage, because there had never been a resurrection to immortality. Therefore, Satan's falsehood, which he had imposed on Eve in the garden of Eden, was not broken by the fact of a resurrection to life eternal. But when the time came for Jesus to die and for his body to be buried, and then be raised to immortality, the devil's falsehood was overthrown by an actual demonstration. He induced Eve to sin, and she induced her husband to sin. By reason of their sin death came upon mankind, generally, and its fear oppressed them. But Jesus burst the bars of death, and planted the banner of life and immortality over the dark silence of the tomb. That is to say, as Paul declares, Christ “hath abolished

death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” In other words, death was deprived of its power to hold mankind when Jesus arose from the dead, because through his resurrection all mankind have assurance of a resurrection. See 1 Corinthians 15:22.

What effect should the 32nd and 33rd verses of this chapter have on Bible readers? It should cause them to be satisfied with the doctrine of the Cross as the power to draw mankind to Christ. That doctrine believed and lived and preached should be regarded as a sufficient drawing power, and, therefore, all who believe in Christ should feel ashamed to think of using a musical instrument, or any other human device, as a power to draw persons to hear the gospel.

What *is* indicated in the 35th verse? Jesus was the light of his disciples, and of all others who believed on him, while he was with them; but he was soon to be taken from them.

What is set forth in the 38th to the 41st verses, inclusive? The fact that God inflicted a judgment of blindness on perverse Jews, because of their perverseness, is here set forth. In Matthew 13:15 mention is made of the fact that those Jews in their perverseness “closed” their eyes in order that they might not be convinced that Jesus is the Christ. By so doing they showed a degree of perverseness which justified God in placing on them a judgment of blindness.

Do any persons now close their eyes against the light of God's word? Millions of them do so, if we may judge by their conduct. Millions of persons who are religious are satisfied with that which they have learned, and are not willing to learn any more. At least they are not willing to learn any truth that condemns them, or that requires them to make any change in their religious life. As a result, they set themselves with perverseness against every intimation that they are wrong in any particular in their religious doctrine or practice. “Their eyes they have closed.”

But what may we say of “the chief rulers” spoken of in the 42nd and 43rd verses? They believed in Christ, but their faith was not sufficient to lead them to obey him by confessing him, regardless of opposition. Therefore, they serve as an illustration of “faith only”, or “faith alone”, and their conduct indicates that their faith was not sufficient to overbalance all opposition.

Why did Jesus say what he did in the 44th and 45th verses? Those verses indicate that the answer to this question is that belief in Christ did not end with him, but reached unto

the Father, because he came from the Father. See chapter 16:28.

Does the 47th verse imply that Jesus will not be the final judge of the world? It does not so indicate, but only declares that while on earth he did not occupy the position of Judge of the world. But 2 Timothy 4:1 informs us that Christ will finally be the judge of both the living and the dead; that is, of those who will then be numbered with the living on the earth, and of those who will then have died. He first came as the Savior, but he will hereafter come as the Judge.

By what standard will mankind be finally judged? The 48th verse of this chapter indicates that the standard of measuring in the final judgment will be the word of God. But Romans 2:12 indicates that this standard will only be used to measure those to whom it will have been made known, or within whose reach it will have been placed. Those heathen to whom the word of God will not have been made known will be judged by the light of nature—external and internal light. See Romans 1:19,20 & 2:12-15.

What may we learn by considering the 49th and 50th verses of this chapter? We may learn that all who teach that some of God's commands are non-essentials are under condemnation. All of his commands, in their divinely appointed application, have been essential to the end which God has had in view in giving them. Therefore ' to ignore them, or to pronounce them non-essential to the end which they were divinely ordained to accomplish, has always been rebellion against God. For this reason a divine command should never be perverted nor misapplied.

CHAPTER XIII

What is set forth in this chapter? It is the chapter which informs us concerning the fact that the Savior washed his disciples' feet, and why he did it; also when he did it, and of certain events connected with it.

Why did the Savior wash his disciples' feet? The answer to this question is recorded in the 15th verse. The Savior said to his disciples, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. "

Was that example intended to establish an ordinance in the church, to be attended to in a public manner, in connection with the communion or any other institution? The silence

of the remainder of the New Testament on the subject forbids any such conclusion. In 1 Peter 4:11 we read, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God", and whoever obeys that command of the Apostle Peter will certainly refrain from speaking of feet washing as "an ordinance" in the Church, to be practiced publicly in connection with the communion or any other institution. Only by ignoring the divine command to "speak as the oracles of God", can any one speak of feet washing as "an ordinance in the Church, to be practiced publicly." And whoever ignores that command certainly ignores the authority by which it was given. This being true, all those who ignore that command might as well ignore all else that has been given by the same authority. An inspired apostle says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10.) This being true, those who ignore the divine authority by which I Peter 4:11 is given might just as well ignore everything else that Peter says, and all that all the New Testament writers say. If a man will take a dozen checks that are given him in a business transaction, and raise the amount designated on one of them, he is liable to go to THE penitentiary, even as he would be if he had raised all of those checks. Besides, we would not have any more confidence in such a man than we would have if he had raised all of them. On the same principle we should regard those who will raise a divine command by applying it beyond that which the divine authority has indicated that it should be applied. The same reasoning by which they try to justify themselves in raising, or extending the application of, one command, they may try to justify themselves in raising, or extending the application of, all other commands that are given by the same authority. What confidence, then, can any one have in those who teach that "feet washing is an ordinance in the church, to be practiced publicly"? To say the least, they are unworthy of confidence, religiously. They may be very good people in other respects, but they are unworthy of our confidence when considered in the light of the Bible.

What does the Sacred Text indicate that Christians should believe in regard to "feet washing"? 1 Timothy 5:10 indicates that Paul wrote of it as numbered with good works, and those who "speak as the oracles of God" will speak of it as a good work, and as a good work only. Therefore, they will never speak of it as "an ordinance to be practiced publicly".

What is the difference between "ordinances" and "good

works”? Those acts which are commonly designated “ordinances” are acts of worship, and, therefore, have strictly a Godward bearing; but those acts which are regarded as “good works” have strictly a manward bearing. “Ordinances” are acts of worship, while “good works” are acts of charity.

To whom did the Savior refer in the 18th verse? He referred to Judas Iscariot, who had eaten bread that the Savior had provided yet turned against him, and sold him into the hands of his enemies.

When did the Savior wash his disciples' feet? The last verse of this chapter indicates that he washed their feet on the night of his betrayal. The 30th and 31st verses, when considered together, confirm this conclusion. But does not the 29th verse indicate to the contrary? No. The entire passover period was ordained to continue seven days. As this was true, there were six days of the feast to make provision for, even after the passover lamb had been eaten. In view of this the supposition of the disciples who did not know what the Savior said to Judas at the time mentioned in the 29th verse of this chapter, is explained as referring to the six days of the feast that had not been provided for.

What was referred to by the word “supper”, as recorded in the 2nd and 4th verses of this chapter? Luke 22:20 informs us that reference was made to the Jewish passover. See Luke 22:7-15. The same Greek word that is translated “supper” in Luke 22:20, is thus translated in the 2nd and 4th verses of the chapter now before us. Besides, the connection in each instance shows that reference was made to the Jewish passover when the word translated “supper” was used.

What may we say to those who teach that the word “supper”, as used in this chapter, referred to a new feast—a feast of boiled beef, and soup made of it, eaten with leavened bread? The presumption and irreverence of those who thus teach is shocking. Matthew, Mark and Luke together make mention of the supper that Jesus ate with his disciples on the night of his betrayal, and over one dozen times they speak of it as “the passover”. Therefore, those who deny the testimony of those three witnesses, and make the declaration that the word “supper” in the 13th chapter of John means a new feast, are guilty of presumption and irreverence which must be, to all true believers in divine testimony who consider such declaration with care, shocking beyond expression.

CHAPTER XIV

What is recorded, in this chapter, for Bible readers to learn? A record is here given to us of a part of the speech which Jesus made to his disciples on the night of his betrayal, and before he went into the garden of Gethsemane.

What did the Savior refer to when he used the expression “many mansions,” in the 2nd verse of this chapter? He had reference to heaven—the place where his Father is. See 28th verse of this chapter. See also chapter 16:5-7 and Acts 2:33. These scriptures, when taken together, show that Jesus intended to leave his disciples and go to the Father, and send them the Holy Spirit as their comforter.

What may we safely say of the idea that by the expression “many mansions” Jesus referred to the many congregations which would be established after his gospel would begin to be preached? That idea is purely fanciful. Moreover, it is contrary to the facts. In strictness of speech, Jesus did not establish the congregations for the Apostles, but they established them for him! See 1 Corinthians 3:9, 10. The Apostles, and their helpers, built the churches for Jesus, that he might dwell in the hearts of his people. See Ephesians 3:17.

But did not Paul declare that the “church of God” is “the house of God”? Yes; and in 1 Timothy 3:15 he thus expressed himself, and the connection shows that he certainly referred to the Church as it then existed. But when Jesus made the speech recorded in the chapter now under consideration the Church had not been established. This should be sufficient. Jesus did not say, “In my Father's house there” will be many mansions, as he said in Matthew 16:18, “Upon this rock I will build my church.” On the contrary, he said, “In my Father's house are many mansions.” He thus spoke of the “house” and the “mansions” in that house as then existing, and there is not a sentence in the context which shows that he referred to the future when he used those words. Besides, when we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 we learn that Jesus will come again, and will receive his faithful ones unto himself.

What may we say of the 6th verse of this chapter? From a human viewpoint it is presumptuous and narrow, but from the divine viewpoint it is grandly comprehensive and exclusive. This verse informs us that Jesus does not propose to divide honors with any one. He declares himself to be the one, and thus the only one, through whom mankind may approach the Father.

In what sense is the 12th verse true? The book called Acts of the Apostles informs us of the only sense in which it is true that any one ever did greater works than those which Jesus wrought. The Apostles preached the gospel to Gentiles as well as to Jews, and introduced the obedient ones of both classes of mankind into the Kingdom of Christ. In so doing they established the Church of Christ, and thus established the kingdom, or reign, of Christ, in the hearts of all who obeyed him.

Does the 14th verse apply to any except the Apostles? No; not as here recorded. But in 1 John 5:14 we may learn what the Lord will do with reference to the prayers of all Christians when they approach him according to his will.

What may we learn by considering the 17th verse of this chapter? It informs us that the world could not receive the Spirit who should be sent into the Apostles. When was that Spirit sent into them? The 2nd chapter of Acts informs us. What was the most prominent effect of that Spirit on those who received him? He enabled them to speak languages they had never learned. In view of this, what may we say of those who now pretend to have received the Spirit, even as the Apostles did? We may say to them as Jesus said to certain Sadducees, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." (Matthew 22:29.) And we may say the same to all who pray that God will send his Spirit into the hearts of sinners to convict and convert them. The Savior declared of the Spirit whom he would send into his Apostles, that "the world cannot receive" him. That should be sufficient for all who believe what the Savior says.

What "day" is referred to in the 20th verse? The day mentioned in the context; that is, the time when the Holy Spirit would come upon the Apostles, is here referred to. The Savior declared that when the Spirit would come upon them then they would understand his relation to the Father, and their relation to him.

What is set forth in the 21st to 24th verses, inclusive? The relation between love and obedience is set forth in those verses. They declare that love for Christ and obedience to his command are inseparably connected. What effect should this have on all who profess to love the Savior? It should cause them to measure their love by their obedience, and to bear in mind that Christ will only give them credit for loving him in proportion as they obey him. Therefore, if at any time they draw back from obedience, they may rest assured that they will be charged with disobedience. Nor is

this all. These scriptures that we are now considering clearly show that love for Christ is not determined by feeling, nor even by thinking, but it is determined by obeying. We may think and feel as much as is possible, yet if we do not obey we are certainly not showing our love for Christ. This does not mean that we do not need to think and feel. On the contrary, all who become Christians must, in so doing, do the best thinking and feeling of which they are capable. Yet if they do not obey the Savior's commands, just as he has given them, they certainly will not receive credit for loving him.

What did the Savior refer to when he said, "The prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me", as recorded in the 30th verse of this chapter? He referred to his own purity. The devil could not find anything in him that was evil, and consequently he could not find a lodgment for any of the evil that he would suggest. As a result, he would be defeated, even as he was on a former occasion. See Matthew 4th chapter. As it was with the Savior so it will be with us if we keep ourselves pure from all evil. The enemy of souls may approach us through one, or more, of his agents, but he will fail to make a connection with anything in us that will be like unto the evil that he suggests. As a result, he will make a failure in his attempts to turn us from the right way. How beautiful, how grand, how glorious, it is for God's children to be so pure that the enemy of souls "hath nothing in" them!

CHAPTER XV

What is here recorded? A continuance of the speech which Jesus made on the night of his betrayal.

Of what are we first informed in this speech? The close relationship between Christ and his disciples is illustrated by the relationship between a vine and its branches. Did the Savior refer to churches, or individual disciples, when he used the word "branches" in the illustration here recorded? He referred to individual disciples. The Church of Christ was not, at that time, established. The Roman Catholic church was not established for hundreds of years after that time, and the oldest of the Protestant churches, that are not mentioned in the Bible, did not come into existence for about fifteen hundred years after that time. Moreover, the entire connection, in which this parable of the vine and branches is found, clearly shows that the Savior was speaking to his disciples when he said, "I am the vine, and ye are

the branches.” Finally, the 2nd verse of this chapter sets forth the same doctrine that is recorded in Hebrews 12:5-10, and this shows, beyond all question, that individual disciples were referred to when the Savior spoke of “branches” in the chapter now before us.

But suppose some one would say, “Christ is the vine; the Apostles were the branches, and we are the fruits,” what should we answer? We should admit that this is true. See 16th verse. Still we should contend that individual disciples are the “branches” because under the figure of a body and its members all Christians are members. See 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. The Apostles were the first branches, and they became such by being the first to obey the Savior. We become branches by obeying the same Gospel that made them branches. They became “members” of Christ, and “branches” of him by obeying his gospel, and the same is true of all others who have obeyed him.

What are the special thoughts that the Savior endeavored to impress on his disciples by his speech concerning the vine and the branches? The closeness of their relationship to him, and their constant dependence on him, seem to be the chief thoughts in that speech. Therefore its effect on us should be to make us wholehearted in our devotion to the Savior, in order that we may “bear much fruit,” and thereby glorify our Father in heaven.

Is it possible to abide in Christ's love without keeping his commandments? The 10th verse of this chapter indicates that it is not. What, then, may we say of those who profess much love for the Savior, but show themselves to be indifferent about learning what Christ's commandments are, and, in some instances, refuse to read or hear anything that explains or enforces certain of Christ's commands? All such are self-deceived. They show that they do not know what love for Christ really means. They seem to suppose that it consists of a gushy emotion instead of an obedient mind and heart and life.

What may we learn by considering the 19th and 20th verses? Those verses set forth warnings for those disciples whom the Savior had personally chosen to be with him while he was on earth in the flesh, and they should be accepted as warnings for us.

What is indicated by the 22nd, 23rd and 24th verses? That the Jews were responsible according to the light of truth which was thrust upon them, is here stated, and that all man

kind are responsible on the same principle, we find here indicated. The Jews would not have sinned in not accepting the Savior if he had not given abundant evidence of his divinity in his words and works. On the same principle mankind in Bible lands would not now be, generally, under condemnation for not believing in Christ if the testimony necessary to produce faith in him had not been placed within their reach.

In how many forms is the divine testimony in favor of Christ, as the Savior of mankind, presented to them? In two written word, and in the word and works of professed Christians. See John 20:30, 31; 2 Corinthians 3:2. The Gospel records were intended to produce faith in Christ, and the same is true of the conversation and conduct of Christians. Very few of the world read the Gospel records, but all have the privilege of reading what is manifest in the life of professed Christians. They are “living epistles, known and read of all men.” What would be the result if all professed Christians would remember this, and would live so as to commend the truth they profess? The world would soon be converted to Christ.

Are the true disciples of the Savior ever “hated” in modern times? Yes, they are hated by all who are not willing to be reprov'd for wrong doctrines or wrong practices. As a result they are hated by all religious sectarians.

What kind of religionists are sectarians? Those who have limited themselves in regard to learning truth, and, therefore, refuse to learn any truth which condemns them in either doctrine or practice.

Of what are we informed in the 26th and 27th verses of this chapter? In these verses the Savior made mention of the Holy Spirit, called “the Comforter,” of what he would do when he would come unto the disciples, and that they should bear witness because they had been with Christ “from the beginning.” What does this imply concerning the character of Christ's witnesses? It was necessary for them to have been with him “from the beginning” of his earthly ministry in order to be witnesses of him. This explains what Peter said in regard to the one who was to be chosen to fill the place of Judas. See Acts 1:22. Here is evidence that the Apostle Peter knew what he was saying when he spoke on that subject, and, thus, that Matthias was properly chosen.

CHAPTER XVI

Of what axe we informed in this chapter? We are informed that the Savior, first, spoke to his disciples of the unfavorable treatment which they would receive, and, then, that it was expedient for them that he should go away, in order that the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, might be sent unto them. Next he informed them what the Holy Spirit would do when he would come and be with them. After this the Savior spoke to his disciples about leaving them "after a little while," and then that he would return to them, likewise that they should weep while the world would rejoice, but that their "sorrow" should be "turned into joy." Of this he gave an illustration, and then declared that when the Holy Spirit would come upon them their joy should not be taken from them. He also told them that, though they had not previously prayed in his name, yet after the Spirit would come upon them they should do so, and their prayers should be answered. The Savior likewise told them that he had spoken to them in proverbs, but that at some date in the future he would not use "proverbs," in addressing them. Finally, we read of what the Savior said to his disciples in regard to the Father's love for them, and of what they said in response to him, concerning their faith. This is followed by the Savior's statement that they would be scattered from him, and then the chapter is ended by mention of the "Peace" that they would have in him, and that though in the world they should have "tribulation," yet they should be comforted because he had overcome the world.

What did the Savior mention as the reason why the enemies of his disciples would persecute them? He said the reason would be because of ignorance concerning his Father and himself. Is this the reason why the enemies of Christ's disciples now persecute them? It is the very reason. They don't know God, nor Christ, in the Scripture sense, and, consequently, don't know true disciples. Therefore they persecute them.

What may we say of the fact that the Savior informed his disciples that they should be persecuted? He treated them fairly, and showed that he was not a deceiver.

By what method of operating did the Savior intend that the Holy Spirit should reprove the world, as mentioned in the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th verses? By the method indicated in Acts 2nd chapter. The Spirit entered the Apostles, took possession of them, and then spoke through them to the people who were not Christians by words which sounded on

their ears, reached their minds, convinced their understanding, and touched their hearts. But all this was accomplished by the words that were spoken.

What is referred to in the statement, “The prince of this world is judged,” as recorded in the 11th verse? Hebrews 2:14 indicates that “the devil,” who is “the prince of this world,” was limited in his' power by the death of Christ.

What may we learn by meditating on the 12th verse of this chapter? We may learn, and ought to learn, the importance of preparation for truth before it is made known. After Jesus had been with his disciples for three years, or more, they were not prepared for some truth that he desired to set before them. This indicates that all those who are advocates of truth should prepare those whom they would teach to receive it. This should prevent all preachers of the Gospel from presenting unwelcome truth to an audience without due preparation.

To what did the Savior refer by the expression “a little while,” in the 16th verse? The events which followed, at an early date, show that he must have referred to the time when his body would be in the grave, and then to his resurrection. The 20th, 21st and 22nd verses of this chapter confirm this conclusion. After his resurrection, from the dead the Savior gave to his disciples an impartation of the Spirit. See chapter 20:22. But after he ascended to heaven he gave them the Spirit in such measure that they had “power,” and could speak languages they had never learned. See Acts 1:8; 2:1-11.

What “day” is referred to in the 23rd verse? The day when the Holy Spirit would come upon them to “guide” them “into all truth.” Did they not pray to the Father in Christ's name while he was with them on earth? The prayer recorded in the 6th chapter of Matthew indicates that they did not. That prayer begins, continues, and ends, without mention of the name of Christ, and this is one reason why Christians should not pray that prayer as there recorded. Colossians 3:17 indicates that all approaches unto the Father, that are made by Christians, in the fulness of the Gospel Age, should be made in the name of Christ.

What is meant by the word “proverbs,” as found in the 25th verse? It means a short or trite saying, or an adage. But the connection in this chapter intimates that it means a saying that is somewhat obscure, for in the 29th verse it is used in contrast with speaking “plainly.” The disciples

were victims of the Jewish prejudice, common at that time, and thus were looking for a Messiah who would be a temporal ruler, or earthly king. As a result, the Savior's teaching concerning his death, burial and resurrection, likewise all that he said about leaving them, and sending the Holy Spirit upon them, was obscure teaching to them, and seemed like a puzzle, or an enigma.

What is suggested by the last part of this chapter? That the disciples were ignorant concerning themselves, is the thought here suggested. They said, "We believe that thou comest forth from God." Yet the Savior knew that they would be "scattered" that very night, and would leave him "alone."

Is it still true that disciples of Christ don't know themselves? Yes. Many of them, in favorable circumstances, seem devoted to the Savior. But as soon as their circumstances change they show that they can easily forget their obligations to the Savior, and go the way of the world. This is very often true when disciples, who have been reared in country places, move into cities. In a majority of instances they seem to forget God, and Christ, and their own souls. This ought not to be so. But at all times, and in all places, all Christians should remember that God sees them, that Christ knows them, and that they are only safe while doing right.

CHAPTER XVII

What is recorded in this chapter? The prayer which our Savior offered to his Father, on the night of his betrayal, and just before he went into the garden of Gethsemane, where he was taken by his betrayers.

What may we learn by meditating on the 5th verse of this chapter? That verse implies that our Savior had an existence, even a glorious existence, with the Father, before the beginning of this world in which we live. In what relation to the Father did he then exist? The first part of the first chapter of this record informs us that he then existed as a divine being called "the Word" of God.

And what of the 8th verse? It reveals that the Father gave his words to his Son, and the Son gave them to his disciples. Does this indicate that the Son is equal to his Father? No. He was of the same family with the Father, and, in that sense, was equal to him, but not in origin nor in power. But the Father brought the Son into existence, and gave to him till the power, or authority, that he ever possessed. See Revelation 3:14; Matthew 28:18.

To whom is reference made in the 12th verse? Historic limitations confine the thought to Judas Iscariot.

What is suggested by the 15th verse? The Savior does not desire that his followers shall be taken out of the world, but that they shall be kept from “the evil” that exists here. We may live in the midst of evil, yet keep ourselves from it, and thereby remain unspotted from the world.

What is indicated by the 17th verse of this chapter? That the words of our Savior are the sanctifying power, is the indication here given. What effect should this have on all those who teach that the Holy Spirit is the sanctifying power, and that in order for persons to be sanctified they must be baptized with the Holy Spirit? All who thus teach “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” The Savior intended to baptize those very disciples with the Holy Spirit, and if the Spirit had been the power to sanctify them he would have said so. But instead of thus saying he prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth,” and then added, “Thy word is truth.” Thus it is written, and thus it remains. By that which is written we shall be judged in the last great day.

What may we learn by considering the 20th to 23rd verses, inclusive? We may learn that the conversion of sinners and the perfection of believers depend on the oneness of the Savior's disciples. From this we may safely conclude that those who are working for unity among Christ's followers are working for the conversion of the world and for the perfection of Christians. And what else may we safely conclude? Our conclusion may be, and should be, that all who disregard the oneness of Christ's followers, especially all who work division among them, are really working against the conversion of sinners and the perfection of Christians. They may pretend to be very much interested in the conversion of the world, and may seem to desire the perfection of the converted ones, but if they are not working for oneness in every particular they are really working against the end for which the Savior prayed. According to these unavoidable conclusions, all sectarians who are advocating names and doctrines not mentioned in the Bible, likewise all professed disciples who are advocating divisive things, are all in opposition to the Savior's prayer. They all advocate divisive things—things that are in opposition to the unity for which the Savior prayed. Their character is described in Romans 16:17, 18.

CHAPTER XVIII

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed that when Jesus had spoken the words mentioned in the preceding chapter he went into a certain garden, and that Judas, who had arranged to betray him, soon came to the place where he was, also that Jesus after arranging for his disciples to escape gave himself into the hands of those who had come to take him. In connection with this we learn of certain conduct on the part of the Apostle Peter, also of what the Savior said to him. Next we are informed that Jesus was led away to the high priest and that he was questioned by him concerning “his disciples” and “his doctrine,” likewise of the answer which Jesus gave to him, and of the mistreatment that he received because of his answer. In connection with this record we find a further account of the Apostle Peter. Then we are informed that Jesus was taken to “the judgment hall,” where the Roman governor was, and of that which there occurred. The chapter is ended with a record of the fact that the Jews who were present preferred a “robber” to Jesus.

What may we learn from the 11th verse? That verse informs us that Jesus spoke of his death as a “cup” which his Father had given to him, and which he was required to “drink.” What he said on that subject is rhetorical in expression, and striking in its meaning.

What effect should the last part of the 20th verse have on all who profess to be Christians? It should certainly impress them with the difference between the teaching of Jesus, and the secrets of certain religio-secular societies.

What is indicated by the 28th verse? Self-deception is indicated. The Jews who were opposed to Jesus had murder in their hearts, yet were afraid of the legal defilement which they imagined would result from entering a Gentile judgment hall.

In view of the 28th and 29th, 33rd and 38th verses, what may we say of a celebrated picture which was intended to represent Jesus before Pilate? That picture represents many Jews in “the hall of judgment,” and some of them are represented as very near to Pilate. That is all contrary to the verses referred to, for they declare that the Jews did not go into Pilate's “hall,” but that he went out to them twice, and spoke to them. Such a mistake, on the part of the celebrated artist, is an index to the inaccuracy which prevails in regard to pictures of Bible events generally. They are

so inaccurate that they should not be designated "Biblical pictures." This remark does not refer to pictures of scenery in Bible lands, but only to pictures of events recorded in the Bible. As a rule those pictures are grossly inaccurate. The same is true of many doctrines found recorded in manmade religious creeds:

Why did the Jews say that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death? They were under tribute to heathen Rome, and because they were in subjection to another power they did not have the authority to put any one to death. Therefore they could not put Jesus to death, but needed to take him before the Roman governor for condemnation.

Does the 36th verse indicate that a Christian cannot be a soldier in a carnal warfare that is just? No, it only intimates that Christians should not engage in carnal warfare to advocate or defend the Gospel. It does not touch the question of civil governments nor of their maintenance.

What is suggested by the Savior's declaration, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," as recorded in the last of the 37th verse? Chapter 8:47; also 10:26, 27; and I John 4:6, are the scriptures that are suggested. What do these scriptures, together with the declaration we are now considering, clearly show? They show that the disposition to hear God's word must exist in order for that word to be heard, and that those who have such disposition are, in some sense, "of God." In what sense mankind must be "of God," in order to hear his word, we may not be able to determine, except by results. Those who are "of God" hear his words, and do not rebel against them. They hearken to them and obey them. They have the disposition that Cornelius had when he uttered the words recorded in Acts 10:33.

Was Pilate's question, as recorded in the 38th verse of this chapter, ever answered? Yes. The Savior answered it in the 17th verse of the preceding chapter of this record. What then may we say of those who declare that the inquiry, "What is truth?" has never been answered? They show their unacquaintance with the divine record.

But is not something besides the divine word worthy of being designated "truth"? Yes. The divine word is truth, and so is every other word which is the exact sign of what is signified by it. The reason why the divine word is truth is mentioned in Psalm 12:6. It is truth because it is pure without admixture of any kind, and this is the essential of all other truth, or truth in all other departments of existence., and domains of thought.

What was true of the Jews who desired “a robber” to be released unto them instead of Jesus? They did not know their best friend, but despised him, and desired a favor for an unworthy character. Have others shown a similar disposition? Yes; the disposition manifested by those Jews who rejected the Savior is a common weakness. Probably nine-tenths of the mistakes made by mankind are the result of not knowing their best friends.

CHAPTER XIX

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are first informed of that which Pilate, and the soldiers who were present, did to Jesus, and said with reference to him. Then we read of what certain “chief priests” and “officers” said in regard to Jesus, what Pilate said, and then what they said in response. Next we read of an interview which Pilate had with Jesus, what he endeavored to do with him, and of that which the Jews said to him, by reason of which, and the continued demand of the Jews that Jesus should be crucified, that Pilate finally pronounced sentence against him. An account of Jesus going to the place where he was to be put to death is next given, and then mention is made of the fact that he was crucified. The title which Pilate wrote, and ordered placed on the cross to which Jesus was nailed, and what was said about that title, we find next recorded. What the soldiers who crucified Jesus did with his garments is next mentioned. Mention is likewise made of certain women who stood near the cross, and of the Apostle John who was there, also of what Jesus said to his mother and to John, and what was meant by that which he said to them. The death of Jesus on the cross is next recorded, followed by a record of the events which were connected with his friends securing his body and placing it in a sepulcher, or tomb.

To whom is reference made in the last of the 11th verse—Judas or the high priest? Judas betrayed Jesus into the hands of the chief priests, and they brought him before the high priest, and he delivered him to Pilate. This indicates that the last of this verse had reference, first, to the high priest. Whether it was intended to refer to Judas, or not, cannot be determined either from the text or from the history of that occasion.

Why did the Jews who opposed the Savior pass from the charge mentioned in the 7th verse to that mentioned in the 12th and 15th verses? They were like all other haters of

truth—wholly unreasonable and unscrupulous. They were determined that Jesus should be put to death, and if they could not succeed by making one charge they would make another. They even pretended to be friends of the Roman emperor, Caesar, in order to secure the condemnation of Jesus.

What may we learn by considering the 14th verse of this chapter? That verse explains what is meant by the word “preparation “ in Matthew 27:62, and shows that it was the day before the passover sabbath, and not the day before the weekly sabbath.

Is there any discrepancy between this verse and Mark 15:25, which makes mention of “the third hour”? No. The “sixth hour” here referred to was the “sixth hour” of “the preparation of the passover”, and when this is considered the apparent discrepancy is relieved, for we are not informed of the exact time when that “preparation” began.

What should we conclude from the title which Pilate wrote to be placed on the cross of Jesus, and that which is recorded concerning that title? We should conclude that it was written by divine guidance, and was here recorded by divine endorsement. At the time John wrote this record Jesus had ascended to heaven, had been made “Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36), and was thus Master, or Ruler. His kingdom was established (Colossians 1:13), and thus he was King at the time John wrote his record.

What is suggested by the fact that Jesus wore a seamless coat, and that it was not parted? As it was with the coat which Jesus wore, so it is with the doctrine that he taught. It is complete in itself, and whoever accepts one part of it should accept it all. Those who profess to have confidence in the moral teachings of Jesus, but reject his proclamation of his divinity, make an unreasonable profession. If Jesus was not, in every respect, all that he proclaimed himself to be, he was a deliberate deceiver or a fanatic, and, in either view of his case, he is unworthy of confidence. Therefore, those who receive any part of his doctrine should receive it all, for it is, from a religious viewpoint, a seamless garment.

What is implied by the provision which Jesus made for his mother while he was hanging on the cross? That her husband was dead, and that Jesus had confidence in the Apostle John as the best one to take care of his mother, is implied by the record given on this subject.

What is indicated by the declaration, “that sabbath day was a high day”, as recorded in the 31st verse? The indication

is that it was not the regular weekly sabbath, and that it was, therefore, the first day of the passover feast, which was a day of “holy convocation”, in which “no manner of work” should be done. Moreover, that “high day” must have been the sixth day of the week, because the body of Jesus, according to prophecy (Matthew 12:40), was to be three nights in the earth. Therefore, he must have been put to death on the fifth day of the week, in order that his body might be in the earth three nights, and be raised on the first day of the week.

What may we say of Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus? They were secret disciples who showed themselves after the death of Jesus. Are there any such now on earth? There are. They will not risk anything to save the Church of Christ, but if it dies they will show they had respect for it.

CHAPTER XX

Of what do we read in this chapter? A record is here offered to us of events that occurred, and of words that were spoken, concerning the resurrection of the Savior's body from the dead, after it had been raised. Chief among those events was the fact the Jesus appeared to his Apostles, and certain others, also that he spoke to them and showed himself to be the same one they had known as Jesus before he was put to death. The chapter is ended with a declaration of the reason that a record of the Savior's miracles was made.

What may we say of the statement in the first part of this chapter when compared with the first part of the last chapter of Matthew's record—do these records contradict each other? No. They do not contradict because they do not exclude each other. They are different statements, but are not exclusive statements, as neither of them excludes the other. Therefore they may be harmonized. Both records inform us that Mary Magdalene ran from the sepulcher, though Matthew tells of another Mary with her while John does not. But Matthew's record is found to be more nearly complete in details than certain others of the inspired writers, in regard to some other events. Compare Matthew 8:28 with Mark 5:1-3. In Luke 24:10 we learn that there were several other women. But John mentions only one of them, and in Mark 16:9 we learn that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene. This may have been the reason why John only mentioned Mary Magdalene. Thus we might proceed and compare these records. In so doing we would find that they do not contradict each other because they do not exclude

each other, and that they harmonize as well as the testimony of truthful witnesses generally do in regard to any event. Identical and similar forms of speech, and lines of testimony, in witnesses, are marks of “drilled witnesses”, who are prepared to give false evidence. But true witnesses seldom give testimony in the same words or in the same order. False witnesses fear to differ from each other; true witnesses fear only to differ from the truth.

But how may we harmonize Matthew 28:9 with the 17th verse? We may harmonize them by supposing the event mentioned in this verse to have preceded what is recorded in Matthew 28:9, and that in the interval Jesus ascended privately to his Father. It is highly probable that Mary Magdalene visited the sepulcher alone, at which time she saw the Savior; and that afterwards she returned to the sepulcher with others. In this view of the record, and that the events are not recorded in strict order in regard to time, all of them may be harmonized.

What may we learn by considering the 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter? They set forth John's account of the last commission which Jesus gave to his Apostles before leaving them. What is here recorded that is not mentioned in the other accounts of that commission? All that is here stated concerning Jesus breathing on his disciples, and saying, “ Receive ye the Holy Spirit, “ is not elsewhere recorded. Did Jesus intend to give to his Apostles power to remit and retain sins, regardless of obedience? No. But as the records which Matthew, Mark and Luke give of the last commission clearly show, Jesus intended that his Apostles should remit and retain sins only by announcing the terms on which Christ would grant remission, and the one condition of condemnation. Beyond this the Apostles did not have any power in regard to remitting and retaining sins. Nor has any power to remit or retain sins, independent of obedience to the divine conditions of remission, been given to any one else for the Gospel Age.

What is offered to us in the last two verses of this chapter? Information is here offered in regard to the divine purpose in causing a record of the miracles of Jesus to be made. That purpose was, and is, to produce faith in mankind, and this implies that the faith, or belief, that saves mankind, is produced by divine testimony. Are all the accounts that are given in the New Testament, of faith produced in the minds and hearts of mankind, in harmony with the mentioned purpose? They are in perfect harmony with that purpose. Ev-

ery case of conversion mentioned in Acts of the Apostles shows that divine testimony was presented before faith, or belief ' was produced in the one who was converted. What then should we say of those who teach that the faith which saves is a "special and direct gift of God"? We should say that they "err, not knowing the Scriptures". There is not on record an instance of belief in Christ, as the Son of God, which is not the result of divine testimony on that subject having been brought, directly or indirectly, in contact with the mind of the one in whom such belief was produced. But suppose that an advocate of faith, as a direct gift, refers to I Corinthians 12:9, as evidence? We should answer that advocate of error by showing that the faith mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:9 was a special gift to certain Christians, even as other gifts were, in the primitive Church; and that it was not the faith, or belief, which is necessary in order to become a Christian.

CHAPTER XXI

And what is recorded for the learning of Bible readers in this chapter—the last of John's record of the gospel? We find an account in this chapter of certain events pertaining to Jesus, to the Apostles, and to certain others, in course of the period that passed between the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension to heaven.

What is indicated by the fact that the Apostle Peter proposed to "go a fishing"? That he did not understand the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, nor the spiritual character of the Church which Jesus came to establish, is indicated.

What did Jesus refer to by his question as recorded in the 15th verse? He referred to the fish which were there, at that time, in abundance. Peter had gone after fish, and by the Savior's direction he had caught many fish, and had dined on fish and bread. In view of all this Jesus inquired of him whether he loved his Savior more than he loved fish. This is the conclusion to which the historic connection confines the thought of those who have due regard for divine testimony.

Why did Jesus inquire of Peter three times on the subject of loving him? We are not informed. But as Peter three times denied his Master, it was appropriate that Jesus should three times inquire of him, "Lovest thou me?"

Who was meant by the expression "this man" in the 21st

verse? The Apostle John was meant. The preceding verse so indicates. Peter, seeing him, asked, "What shall this man do?" The Savior had told Peter three times what he should do, and then he wished to know what John should do. By his inquiry on that subject he showed the disposition that a child sometimes does in a family where there are several children. If one of them is told what to do, that one sometimes inquires what the others are going to do.

Did Jesus gratify Peter's desire in regard to John? He did not, but said that to him which implied that it was not his business to know what John should do. This suggests Luke 13:23, 24. A certain man inquired, "Are there few that be saved?" The Savior's answer indicates that a man's chief business should be to "strive" to save himself.

In what sense should we accept the word "world" in the last verse of this chapter? We should accept it in the same sense that we accept that word in chapter 3:16. When the Savior said, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son", he did not mean the material world, but the world of mankind. The same is true of the word "world" in the verse we are now considering. Jesus did not mean the material world, but the world of mankind. Moreover, the word here translated "contain" means "to make room, to move, pass, to proceed, go on, to progress, make way; to hold, contain, afford room for; to give mental admittance to, to yield accordance; to admit, to regard cordially." I quote all these shades of meaning in order that the reader may see that we are not bound to the translation given in the Common Version. I believe the translation which would give the full idea would be this: The world (of mankind) could not find room for the books. In other words, the volume would be so large that it would be overwhelming in size, if "every one" of the "things which Jesus did" should be fully recorded therein. Moreover, the mind of mankind would not be able to receive such an amount of testimony as would be offered, if all the Savior's miracles had been recorded.

In conclusion we may inquire, What are the characteristics of John's record? This record begins by a declaration concerning Christ as "the Word" before he was made known on earth in an earthly body, and it ends by a declaration concerning the number of Christ's miracles. Between such a beginning and ending the writer unfolds the Sonship, of Christ more constantly and fully than any other writer does. The chief characteristic of Jesus which Matthew indicates is that he is the Fulfiller of the Law and the Prophets. The

chief characteristic of him which Mark presents is that he is the Mighty Worker. The chief that Luke presents is that he is the Friend of man. And John presents him to our view as the Son of God. It is true that each of the mentioned writers offers, in some measure, all of the characteristics just named. Yet each of them places special emphasis on the characteristics of which mention has just been made. All of them combined present to the mind sufficient evidence concerning Jesus of Nazareth to show that he is the Son of God, the Savior of the world. But in order for mankind to believe on him it is necessary for them to suffer that evidence to be brought in contact with their minds, and, in many instances, to study it with care.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

CHAPTER I

What may be safely stated of the book of Acts, in general, and of the first chapter of this book in particular? It is the central book of the New Testament. Nearly the same amount of teaching precedes it that follows it. Besides, all that precedes it was chiefly intended to produce faith in Christ; while all that follows it was chiefly intended to inform Christians how to live in harmony with the will of Christ. Between the two departments of teaching just mentioned the book of Acts is found, and it shows that it was chiefly intended to inform mankind how to become Christians.

In the first chapter of this book its author makes mention of a former document which he had written to a certain person, and of what he had set forth in that document concerning Jesus. Then he makes mention of the fact that Jesus appeared alive to his disciples after his sufferings, and of what he commanded and promised them, likewise of what they inquired of him concerning his kingdom, and of what he answered them. Next we are informed concerning his ascension to heaven from their presence, and of the fact that angels, in the appearance of men, spoke to them in regard to the ascension of Jesus to heaven, also of the manner in which he will return from heaven. Next we read of the fact that the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the place where they had witnessed the ascension of Jesus, and that they, with others, continued in prayer in Jerusalem, likewise that, in course of the period that they continued there the Apostle Peter declared that one should be chosen to fill the place of Judas, who had fallen from his position as an apostle, and had hanged himself. In the last part of this chapter we are informed of what was said and done in regard to choosing a man named Matthias, and that he was numbered with the other Apostles.

What is meant by the word “treatise,” as recorded in the first verse of this chapter? It means a written discourse, or a document of any kind, which treats of one, or more than one, subject. To what document did the writer of this book 257

refer by the expression “former treatise”? We may safely conclude that reference was made to Luke's record of the Gospel, for that record, as well as the book now before us, was addressed to a man named “Theophilus.” This is a clear indication that Luke's record of the Gospel, and the Book of Acts, were both written by the same person.

Is there any special significance in the expression “began both to do and teach, “ as recorded in the last of the first verse? It signifies that the doings and teachings of Jesus on earth were only the beginning of what he intended to do and teach.

What is meant by the word “passion,” as recorded in the second verse? It means “suffering,” and refers specially to the death of Jesus on the cross.

What is meant by the word “infallible,” as found in the second verse? It means unerring, and thus the expression “infallible proofs” refers to the fact that Jesus appeared alive to his disciples by unmistakable proofs after he had been crucified, and had been raised from the dead. He appeared to some, or all, of them in open daylight, by the seaside, on the public highway, in a room where they were assembled, and thus appeared often in course of forty days. They heard him speak, they talked with him, they ate with him, and even had the privilege of handling him, so as to assure themselves fully of his identity, and, thus, that they were not deceived.

What may we say of the question recorded in the 6th verse? It indicates the power of prejudice in favor of an error. The Jewish people expected that the Messiah would be a temporal, or earthly, ruler, who would reign at Jerusalem in power, and would deliver them from all their earthly enemies. The idea that their Messiah would only be a spiritual ruler seemed not to have occurred to them. The Apostles were partakers of that erroneous prejudice, or prejudgment. As a result they did not understand anything that Jesus said to them, in regard to his death, burial and resurrection. Neither did they understand what he meant by his teaching in regard to the spiritual kingdom which he came to establish. On the contrary, they thought he would establish an earthly power, of some kind, and that they would be great men under him. They even inquired of him in regard to which of them should be the greatest. That prepossession was so well established in their minds that it was not dispelled by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. But

after he had been raised from the dead they inquired, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" By that inquiry they showed that they still expected that he would deliver the Jewish nation from the power of heathen Rome.

What should we learn by considering the power of the mentioned prejudice on the minds of the Apostles? We should learn to be patient with all mankind when we endeavor to teach them the Gospel. Many of them have been biased in favor of some erroneous doctrine or practice, and, as a result, they are not prepared to understand the Gospel. For this reason, we should be very patient with them.

What may we learn by considering the Savior's answer to his Apostles, when they inquired of him in regard to restoring again the kingdom of Israel? We may learn that we should not inquire beyond what is revealed, but should be satisfied with that which the Lord has offered to us in his Word. We may also learn that Jesus intended to send the Holy Spirit upon his Apostles in order that they might have "power," and be fitted to testify of him.

Does any other writer inform us that Jesus will come from heaven in the same manner that he went to heaven? Yes, in Revelation 1:7 we are informed that he will come "with clouds. "

When Jesus had left his Apostles were they entirely left to themselves? They were not, for while Jesus was still with them he "breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This implies that a "measure" of the Spirit, which had been bestowed upon him, he then and there bestowed on them. See John 20:22.

In view of this what may we say of those who declare that the Apostle Peter was without divine guidance in that which he said, and did, in regard to choosing Matthias to fill the place of Judas? We may say that they "do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." In the speech of Peter, as recorded in this chapter, he showed that he understood the Scriptures which pertained to Judas, and how to apply them. He showed also that he knew what kind of a witness should be chosen in the place of Judas. Moreover, in casting lots for a witness Peter showed that he knew the Jewish law had not been entirely fulfilled, and, therefore, that it was right to cast lots even as the Jews had done under the law. See Numbers 26:55; Judges 1:3; 1 Samuel 14:41; Proverbs 16:33. The first chapter of Jonah informs

us that when lots were cast in regard to a man, in course of the Jewish Age, God interposed and caused the lot to fall upon the right man.

What other evidence have we that Matthias was properly chosen, and that he was one of the Apostles? The last verse of this chapter informs us that “he was numbered with the eleven Apostles.” This is sufficient evidence to assure us that he was divinely recognized as one of the Apostles, even if we could not find any other evidence on that subject. But the first part of the 2nd chapter of this book clearly implies that Matthias was with “the eleven Apostles” when the Holy Spirit came upon them, and, therefore, that he was one of those on whom the Spirit came in a miraculous manner. Besides, the 14th verse of the 2nd chapter declares that when Peter began to make his defense against a certain false charge, he stood up “with the eleven.”

This shows that there were eleven Apostles besides Peter, and this includes Matthias as one of them. In view of all this we see that the divine record placed Matthias in the office of an apostle, and numbered him with the Apostles. Then, as the divine record does not take him out of that office, we must leave him there.

But this is not all that may be said concerning the certainty of the fact that Matthias was divinely chosen, and divinely recognized as an apostle. In the 6th chapter and 2nd verse of this record which we are now considering Luke informs us that Matthias was numbered with the other Apostles, for we are here informed that “the twelve called the multitude together.” This shows that Luke must be impeached, as a writer, before Matthias can be excluded from the apostleship. Yes, and the Apostle Paul must likewise be impeached in order to reject Matthias from the apostleship, for he says that Jesus was seen after his resurrection “of the twelve” before he was seen of him who was “born out of due time,” and as one who was not fit “to be called an apostle” because he had “persecuted the Church of God.” See 1 Corinthians 15:5-9.

What should we say to those who say that Matthias had not been chosen at the time that Paul declared Jesus was “seen” of the twelve? We should say that Paul, as an inspired man, knew that Jesus was seen by Matthias who was afterwards numbered with the twelve, and that, therefore, in the divine mind Matthias was numbered with “the twelve” before he was chosen by “lot.” The Holy Spirit knew who should be chosen to fill the place of Judas, and who would be chosen

to fill his place, and that Spirit designated him as a witness because he really was the witness who, at the proper time, would be selected and numbered with the eleven. Therefore, in the divine decision, of that which would come to pass, Matthias was one of “the twelve” before he was chosen by lot to be numbered with them. This being true, all those who endeavor to break the force of Paul's testimony concerning Matthias make a mistake, and cast reflection on themselves. For those who are shrewd enough to offer such a criticism, as that which has just been exposed, are certainly clear enough in brain to estimate' aright the divine testimony on this subject, and might do so if they would only exercise due reverence for that testimony.

But what should we say to those who endeavor to discredit all that is said, by inspired writers, in favor of the proposition that Matthias was an apostle because, as they affirm, that there would, then, be “thirteen Apostles”? We should inform them that God had thirteen tribes, one from each of eleven of Jacob's sons, and two from Joseph, which made thirteen tribes. (Genesis 48th chapter.) God knew what to do with thirteen tribes, and Christ knew what to do with thirteen Apostles. God chose the tribe of Levi to be the priestly tribe, and scattered it among the others. Christ needed the Apostle Paul to send him among the Gentiles. But in Revelation 7:5-8 we find that all of the tribes are mentioned except Dan, and in Revelation 21:14 we learn that one of the Apostles is not referred to. Whether that one will be Peter because he denied his Master, or Thomas because he doubted, or Paul because he persecuted the Church before he was called to be an apostle, we are not informed. Neither does it become us to speculate in regard to it. But we should be satisfied that the Lord understands his own business. He knew why he needed thirteen tribes, also why he needed thirteen Apostles. He knew when and why he should omit mention of one of the tribes, also when and why he should omit reference to one of the Apostles. We should not try to adjust God's affairs for him, but should receive his testimonies, on all questions, in their divinely appointed order, and at their divinely appointed value.

What use may we make of the 15th verse of this chapter? The fact that the number of the names of those who continued in prayer is mentioned is an indication in favor of a church record. A further indication in this direction is found in the fact that mention is made of the number of those who were added to the disciples as a result of the preaching that was done on the day of Pentecost.

CHAPTER II

What is recorded for our learning in this chapter? We find a record, first, of the fact that the Holy Spirit came upon the twelve Apostles and enabled them to speak with other tongues; then of the fact that when the report of that which had occurred was made known, the multitude of the people came together, and were astonished at that which they saw and heard. Next we read of a false charge that was made against the Apostles, and that one of their number defended himself, and his brethren, against that charge; also that he explained that which was then astonishing the multitude then present. After that he referred to certain facts concerning Jesus, showed that they were in fulfillment of prophecy, and then he declared that Jesus had been made both Lord and Christ. The effect which such a declaration had on the minds of many who heard it, the question they asked, and the answer which the Apostle Peter gave, we find next recorded. Then we find mention made of the obedience which many persons showed at that time, and of that which they did in worship and work after their baptism. The chapter is ended with mention of the Church, and of those who were added to the Church.

What is meant by the word "Pentecost," found in the first verse of this chapter? It means "fiftieth day," and is used as the Greek name of the feast of the Jews, which was held fifty days after "the passover." See Leviticus 23:15-21. In Deuteronomy 16:10, it is mentioned as "the feast of weeks." It was held near the time in the year that Moses was called up into Mt. Sinai to receive the Jewish law. The 12th chapter of Exodus informs us that the passover was held in the middle of the first month of the year, and in Exodus 19th chapter we learn that on the first of the third month they came to Mount Sinai.

What was it that "filled all the house" where the Apostles "were sitting," as mentioned in the 2nd verse? It was the "sound" that came "from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind."

What use may Bible readers make of this verse? They may use it, first, to show that the Holy Spirit which came upon the Apostles was from heaven, and thus that the word translated "wind," in John 3:8, does not refer to the Holy Spirit, for the indication here is that the Spirit came from heaven, but we do not know where the wind comes from. Then we may use this verse to confute those who say that the New Testament does not authorize Christians to have houses in

which to meet, nor seats to sit on, for we here read of “the house where they were sitting.”

What should we say to those who declare that the 3rd verse of this chapter teaches that the Apostles were “baptized with fire” on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them? We should say that this verse does not thus declare, nor does it thus imply. The expression, “tongues like as of fire” is very different from “fiery tongues.” The word “fire” in this verse is used to indicate the appearance of the tongues. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus in “bodily shape like a dove,” but this does not imply that a dove came upon Jesus. See Luke 3:22. Moreover the prophecy of Joel, as repeated in the 17th verse of this chapter, did not promise the baptism of fire, mentioned in Matthew 3:11, and, the “fire” mentioned in the 19th verse of this chapter refers to the divine judgments of the last days. See Revelation 6. 12.

What should we answer those who deny that the Apostles spoke “with other tongues “ on the day of Pentecost, but say that the people heard them in “other tongues”? We should say to them that every explicit statement, and every implication, in regard to “other tongues” in the entire New Testament, is against such an idea. Moreover, if the miracle in regard to hearing, on that occasion, was on the ears of the hearers, and not on the tongues of the speakers, then the same may have been true on all other occasions, and all the divine declarations concerning “other tongues” were false, and deceptive. According to that idea there was never any need for “other tongues,” nor other languages, to be used by the Apostles, nor by any one else, and all that the New Testament sets forth in regard to the interpretation of tongues is erroneous and deceptive.

Who were the “proselytes” mentioned in the last of the 10th verse? They were persons of other nations who had adopted the Jewish religion. In view of this, what may we say to those who declare that only Jews were present on the day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter? We may say to them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.”

What does the 14th verse indicate? That when the Apostle Peter made his speech the time had come for one man to do the preaching, is here indicated. At first all the Apostles spoke, and expressed themselves in languages they had never learned. But when the multitude had come together, and the time had come for the Gospel to be preached, then only one speaker was needed, for there was, at least, one lan-

guage which the multitude understood, and that was the Hebrew. In the multitude then assembled many who were Jews were present who knew one other language, or more than one, but there was one language common to them all, namely, the Hebrew. In that language one person could speak to them all so that they could all understand.

Did the expression, “my words,” found in the last of the 14th verse mean that the “words” which the Apostle Peter spoke on that occasion originated with him? The 4th verse of this chapter indicates that those words were dictated and impelled by the Holy Spirit which was in him, and had taken possession of him. Jesus said of that Spirit, he “shall be in you,” and “shall teach you all things,” and “he shall reprove the world of sin.” See John 14:17, 26; 16:8. As God had testified by his Spirit in his prophets (Nehemiah 9:30), so Christ intended to testify by the Spirit in the Apostles. In view of this we can understand that the Holy Spirit spoke through the Apostles, and inspired evangelists, in making known the truth which is recorded in the New Testament.

What is the force of the 15th verse? 1 Thessalonians 5:7 indicates that the custom in those days was against drunkenness in the day time, especially in the former part of the day.

Do the 17th and 18th verses indicate that the Holy Spirit was “poured out” upon any besides the Apostles? It does, and in view of the fact that the Spirit, in a similar manner, came upon Cornelius and his household (chapter 10:24, 33-44; 11:15, 16), we are forced to conclude that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was intended for others besides the Apostles. Moreover, in chapter 1:15, we learn that about a hundred and twenty disciples were present when Matthias was chosen, and, as the divine record does not inform us that any of them were separated from the Apostles before the day of Pentecost had “fully come,” we should not suppose that any of them were absent on that occasion. Finally, the mother of our Savior was in the company (chapter 1:14), and she was certainly as worthy of the Holy Spirit as were the kinsmen and friends of Cornelius.

What period is referred to in the 19th and 20th verses? The ending of the Gospel Age. See Revelation 6:12-17. The 17th and 18th verses refer to the beginning, or introduction, of that age, and the 19th and 20th verses refer to the ending of that age.

Does the 21st verse of this chapter teach that mankind can be saved by calling on the name of the Lord without obeying

the Gospel? No. Matthew 7:21 informs us that to call on God without obeying him is in vain. Besides, the 38th verse of the chapter now before us sets forth the necessity of obedience. When heart-pierced Jews inquired what they should do, the apostle did not say to them that they needed only to “call on the name of the Lord” in order to be saved, but he told them to “repent and be baptized.”

What may we say of the 22nd, 23rd and 24th verses of this chapter? They make up the first part of Peter's speech concerning Christ, and are an introduction to certain prophecies of David in regard to Christ.

What may we learn by considering this prophecy of David? We may, first, learn that David's throne was typical of the Lord's throne in heaven. It is plainly designated “the throne of the Lord” in 1 Chronicles 29:23. This indicates the spiritual bearing of God's promise to David in Psalm 89:35-37. If that promise is considered in its earthward bearing its fulfillment will be found to have been dependent on obedience to God on the part of David's children. See 1 Kings 2:1-4; 9:4-7. Though David's children did not obey, God, and on that account David's earthly throne was overthrown, yet in its spiritual bearing that throne is established in the heavens, and Christ is seated thereon.

What should we say to those who suppose that the Anglo-Saxon are the offspring of the ten tribes of Israel, that are supposed to have been lost, and thus that the sovereign of Great Britain is a descendant of David? We should remind them that if their vain suppositions could be proved to be unmingled truth, as far as the ten tribes are concerned, yet their reasoning is wrong; because David was of the tribe of Judah, and not of one of the ten tribes that are, erroneously, supposed to have been lost. The Bible does not intimate that they are lost, nor that they will be lost. On the contrary, all of them, except the tribe of Dan, are mentioned by name in Revelation 7th chapter.

What may we say of the word “hell” in the 27th and 31st verses? The Greek word in both of those verses, which is translated by the word “hell” is “hades,” and means “the unseen world,” and does not include the final abode of the wicked. Therefore, the translation in the mentioned verses is misleading. Later versions of the Sacred Text, generally, avoid the translation here given in the Common Version.

What does the 33rd verse of this chapter indicate? That the promise of the Savior in John 16:7 was fulfilled is the indication here given.

And what may we learn by considering the 34th verse? We may learn that all those are in error who teach that Christ took all the Old Testament saints with him when he ascended to heaven, for David had “not ascended into the heavens,” even as late as the day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter. In view of this we may learn also that all those are in error who, on funeral occasions, or any others, declare the righteous dead are “rejoicing around the throne of God in heaven.” If David had “not ascended into the heavens” at the time that Peter preached the sermon we are now considering, we should not affirm, nor even intimate, that any others of the redeemed have gone to the throne of God in heaven.

In view of the 34th, 35th and 36th verses, what may we say of those who declare that Christ has not yet commenced to reign? We may say to them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” Those verses are the consummation of Peter’s sermon, and they set forth the chief facts on which the authority of Christ is based. Besides, those facts are in perfect harmony with I Corinthians 15:24, 25, in which the time is mentioned when Christ will deliver up “the kingdom to God,” and then the declaration is made, “For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” Connect that declaration with the 34th and 35th verses of this chapter, and the conclusion is unavoidable that Christ is now reigning as King, and that he will continue to reign till he will have overcome all his foes.

What is implied in the 37th verse? The implication here is that the effect expressed by the words, “pricked in their heart,” was produced by the “words” which the Apostle Peter began to speak at the time mentioned in the 14th verse. This shows that when the Savior declared that the Spirit he would send would “reprove the world of sin,” he meant that the Spirit would accomplish that end through the words which he would enable inspired ones to speak. Thus it was in Old Testament times. See Nehemiah 9:30. And thus the Spirit of God operates on the people of the world in the Gospel Age, as the 37th verse of this chapter with all other cases of conversion recorded in this book together indicate.

What is set forth for Bible readers in the 38th verse of this chapter? Two commands, and two promises, of the Gospel are here set forth. The commands are repentance and baptism, and these are followed by the promises “remission of sins” and “the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

What should we say to those who teach that the baptism com-

manded in this verse refers to Spirit baptism? We should try to inform them that Spirit baptism was a promise to be received, by those for whom it was intended (Mark 1:8), while water baptism is a command to be obeyed, by all who desire to become Christians. Therefore, whenever baptism was commanded by inspired ones reference was thereby made to water baptism, even if the word “water” is not mentioned in the connection of that command.

In view of the verse now before us, what should we say to those who teach that water baptism is not necessary to salvation from sin? We should try to inform them that they should cultivate reverence for the words of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Peter, speaking as the Spirit of God gave him utterance, said to heart-pierced persons, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” In view of this the most ordinary reverence requires that we shall admit that this verse means what it sets forth, and sets forth what it means, and, therefore, we should admit that baptism, as well as repentance, is necessary to remission of sins.

But what should we say to those who wish to change the translation of this verse so as to cause it to read “unto remission of sins,” or “into remission of sins”? We should admit that the translations just mentioned are better than the one which we have in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, and then we should show that each of the translations just given indicates that baptism is necessary to “remission of sins” as clearly as is indicated in the common translation, for in each instance the believing penitent must pass through baptism in order to reach “the remission of sins.”

But, what of the idea that the Holy Spirit intended for persons to be baptized “because of “ remission of sins already received? In regard to that idea we may safely say that it is as erroneous as to say that the Holy Spirit commanded repentance “because of “ remission of sins already received. The two commands—” repent and be baptized” — are so connected that the purpose for which one of them was given, is, evidently, the purpose for which the other was given. Therefore, they cannot be scripturally separated. “What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder” (Matt. 19:6), was spoken with special reference to the marriage relation, but it is applicable to all other relations. The Savior did not say “whom” God hath joined, but “what” he hath joined. This implies that he spoke with reference to

relations, and not specially with reference to persons. In view of this we must not separate the commands, “repent and be baptized,” by teaching that one of them is “for the remission of sins,” while the other is “because of” such remission.

But what should be our response to those who say that in order for baptism to be valid it is necessary for the person who is baptized to understand “the design of baptism”? We should respond that the Holy Spirit does not use the expression, “design of baptism,” and that those who speak “as the oracles of God” will not use that expression. To this we should add, that we need to understand what divine commands require us to do, but it is not necessary to understand the divine purpose in giving those commands.

But what ought we to say to those who state that the expression “for the remission of sins” is a part of the command to “be baptized”? We ought to deny such a statement, and set forth that the expression “for the remission of sins” indicates a promise, even as the words “you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” indicate a promise. The verse before us sets forth two commands, and two promises. These commands and promises are easily understood by all who will take the Sacred Text in all that it says, in regard *to them, and will not add anything. For in Mark 16:16 the Savior declares, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Certainly the expression “shall be saved” in that declaration refers to “remission of sins,” as recorded in the verse before us. Therefore the expression “for the remission of sins” is a promise which means the same that “shall be saved” means. Both expressions refer to the forgiveness of past sins, and such forgiveness is promised to all those who are baptized after having made the proper change in mind and heart and life.

What is referred to by the promise, “and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”? As this promise is made to all, and is in the singular number, it must refer to an impartation of the Holy Spirit. See chapter 5:32, also Romans 5:5; Ephesians 1:13, 14.

May not the expression “the gift of the Holy Ghost” refer to the special gifts which were bestowed on many, if not all, of those who were obedient to the Gospel in the days when the Apostles personally preached the Gospel? No, because, as far as the record informs us, those gifts were bestowed by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, were very different in kind, and were spoken of, in general, as “gifts,”

and not as “the gift. “ See 1 Corinthians 12th chapter. But here is a promise of that which is designated “the gift of the Holy Ghost,” and this promise was certainly intended to be the same for all, and in all, who would obey the Gospel. What, then, must this promise be? Galatians 4:6 declares thus of obedient believers: “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Then in Romans 8:15, the Spirit which thus speaks in obedient believers is designated, “the Spirit of adoption,” while in Ephesians 1:13 it is spoken of as “that Holy Spirit of promise.” This being true we are bound down to the conclusion that “the gift of the Holy Ghost,” promised in the verse under consideration, was intended to be an impartation of “the Spirit itself,” and is variously designated as “the Spirit of adoption that Holy Spirit of promise,” and “the Spirit of his [God's] Son.”

But some one may ask, “What does that Spirit do for us more than the written word does?” The same Spirit in the Apostle Paul says, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5), and further, “But ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15), and, finally, “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Galatians 4:6.)

But suppose that some one tries to break the evident meaning, or bearing, of the scriptures just cited, then what? We should refer that one to 1 Peter 4:11, and should state that those who “speak as the oracles of God” do not try to break the force, nor discard the evident meaning, of any part of those oracles. On the contrary, all who are satisfied to “speak as the oracles of God” are certainly disposed to be satisfied with the evident meaning of those oracles when taken in their connection. Finally, we should endeavor to show that the same principle of reasoning, which will break the force of the scriptures to which we have referred, will, if always adopted, break the force of all other scriptures, and will make the Bible to us a book which does not mean what it says, nor say what it means. This will make it to us a book of confusion even as it is to the advocates of human creeds, and human confessions of faith, because they endeavor to interpret the Bible to suit those creeds and confessions.

What is referred to by the word “promise” in the 39th verse? If that word had been used by the Holy Spirit with strict reference to the obedient we would be compelled to conclude

that reference was made to the promise, which is mentioned in the last part of the preceding verse, and is definitely named as “that Holy Spirit of promise” in Ephesians 1:13. But as “the promise” here mentioned is made to all the Jews, also to the Gentiles, without direct reference to obedience, we are, by limitation, compelled to conclude that reference was here made to the promise made to Abraham, that in him should all families of the earth be blessed. See Genesis 12:3 and Acts 13:23, also Romans 9:8. And this is summed up in the resurrection from the dead. See Acts 26:6-8, 23.

What is the force of the expression “untoward generation,” as found in the last of the 40th verse? The word here translated “untoward” means “crooked, perverse, wicked.” This indicates that the Apostle Peter exhorted the people, whom he addressed on the day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter, to save themselves from that perverse generation by obeying the Gospel. This is very evident from that which the record here declares of the result.

What may we learn by considering the 41st verse? The word here translated “gladly” also means “joyfully,” and it indicates that which is yet true. Those who receive the Gospel “gladly” or “joyfully” are baptized, while all others draw back from baptism. This is very significant in regard to all who hear the Gospel. Those who “gladly receive the Word” obey Christ in baptism, regardless of the season of the year, while those who receive it reluctantly, or in an unfavorable frame of mind, either turn from baptism entirely, or they are disposed to be baptized only in warm weather.

What should we say to those who declare that it was impossible for the Apostles to immerse three thousand persons in one day, and, therefore, immersion could not have been the New Testament method of baptizing? We should first refer them to John 5:2, which makes mention of a pool at Jerusalem, and then we should inform them that a preacher, who understands how to baptize, can, without haste, immerse one person each minute, when properly waited on. Fifty immersions in an hour can be easily performed, by a preacher of ordinary strength and presence of mind. At this rate twelve preachers could have baptized three thousand persons in course of five hours.

What is referred to in the 42nd verse? Reference is here made to the worship of those who had been baptized. Are all the acts of worship here mentioned? No, but they are all implied,

The Apostles' doctrine, or teaching, embraces what is set forth in Ephesians 5:19, also in Colossians 3:16. To what does the word "fellowship," as found in this verse, refer? It refers to the contribution. This is indicated by the fact that it was something that was "continued in," or that it was "attended to" as certain versions inform us that this text should be translated. There is a "fellowship" which we have as a result of obeying the Gospel. See 1 John 1:7. But the fellowship which we find mentioned in the text before us is like praying and breaking of bread—something that was done, or attended to. In Romans 15:26 the Greek word translated "contribution" is the same that is here translated "fellowship," and it means "joint participation" in giving or doing. In the instance before us it refers to giving for the support of poor saints.

Is this the only purpose for which the contribution was made in the New Testament Church? This is the only purpose for which the contribution is mentioned, yet as it is the only plan given in the New Testament for raising money we are confined to the conclusion that this is the only plan that was employed to gather money for any other purpose. Therefore, when the church in Philippi gathered money to send to Paul (Philippians 4:15), we must conclude that the money that was sent was gathered by the weekly contribution. Yet we should not overlook 1 Corinthians 16:17. Paul was one of the poor saints, and the same is, generally, true of all other preachers of Christ. If they are not poor when they begin to preach the Gospel they will likely become poor, especially if they are very zealous.

What should we say to those who regard the 41st verse of this chapter as a ritual, and, therefore, contend for the order of events here mentioned as indicating a prescribed form, or order, of worship? We should inform them that this verse only makes a historic statement of events, and that history does not always mention events in their order in regard to time, but sometimes mentions them in the order of their importance, or, for some other reason, disregards, what may be, designated, their chronological order. See 1 Corinthians 6:11 and 1 Timothy 3:16. In the former passage sanctification is mentioned before justification, and in the latter the fact that Jesus was "preached unto the Gentiles" is mentioned before the fact that he was "received up into glory." In both of these scriptures the chronological order of the events mentioned is disregarded. This should be sufficient to convince those of their mistake who endeavor to use the 42nd verse of this chapter as a ritual,

What may we learn by considering the 44th and 45th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the church in Jerusalem had a community of goods, or a common treasury, out of which the needs of all the members were supplied. Was this arrangement divinely required? The record does not so inform us, but the indications are that the community of goods, in the church at Jerusalem, was strictly a voluntary arrangement, adopted as a result of the freewill and benevolence of its members. This is evident from the absence of a command requiring it, and from chapter 5:4.

Does the expression “breaking bread” in the 46th verse refer to the same that it does in the 42nd verse? It does not, but refers to the daily eating of food to nourish the body. This is indicated by the fact that it is in the 42nd verse connected with the contribution and prayers, while in the 46th verse it is connected with their daily conduct in the temple, and the eating of food.

What may we learn by considering the last verse of this chapter? The translation given of this verse in the Common Version is not the best. Later versions inform us that the Lord added to the Church daily the saved ones, or those that were being saved. This is the right idea, for it is in harmony with the 40th verse which informs us that the Apostle Peter ,commanded those whom he addressed to “save themselves” from the wicked generation in which they were living, and that could only be done by their obedience to the Gospel. The plan of salvation has a divine side, and a human side. On the divine side salvation has been provided and offered; on the human side it must be accepted in order to be made effective.

CHAPTER III

What is recorded in this chapter? We first find a record of the fact that two of the Apostles went up into the temple, at a certain hour, that as they went up they came to a lame man whom the Lord gave perfect soundness through them, that the people in the temple who learned of the miracle wrought on the lame man were filled with “wonder and amazement,” and, as a result, they came to those apostles “greatly wondering.” Next we find a record of a speech which the Apostle Peter made to the people who had come to him because of the miracle which had been wrought through him and his brother apostle.

What may we say of the miracle which is recorded in the first part of this chapter? It was benevolent and was complete,

satisfying and overwhelming. The lame man appreciated it more than he would have appreciated a large sum of money, or any other earthly gift. It gave him “perfect soundness,” and, therefore, satisfied all who were interested in his welfare. Besides, it was overwhelming to the minds of others. See chapter 4:14.

What should we say to those who teach that when the Lord gave the lame man, mentioned in this chapter, perfect physical soundness he converted his soul? We should say that they teach thus without authority. The record here given does not intimate that the Lord converted him, though it indicates that he was ready to believe on Christ, if we may judge from the fact that he engaged in “praising God.” Besides, the time had then come when conversion required obedience to the Gospel. See 19th verse.

What is the difference between the 19th verse of this chapter and the 38th verse of the preceding chapter? They differ in form or expression, but are the same in teaching. They both command repentance, and both promise remission of sins. Besides, chapter 2:38 makes use of the explicit promise of “the gift of the Holy Ghost,” while the verse before us implies the promise of the Spirit because it makes mention of “times of refreshing” “from the presence of the Lord.” This is a poetic reference to the blessedness of those who receive the “spirit of adoption” which is mentioned in Romans 8:15, and Galatians 4:6, even as “the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” is a poetic reference to the sanctification which results from growing in grace and in knowledge of the truth. See 2 Peter 1:19; 3:18.

But why did the Apostle Peter command persons to “be baptized “ in the 38th verse of the previous chapter, and command them to “be converted” in the 19th verse of this chapter? The answer is evident when we consider all that is said of baptism in the New Testament.

1. It is spoken of as a birth—”born of water.” (John 3:5.)
2. It is spoken of as necessary to salvation—”for [or into] the remission of sins.” (Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38.)
3. It is commanded to be submitted to in the name of the Godhead— “baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matt. 28:19.)
4. It is spoken of as a part of the divine counsel—”rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized of him.” (Luke 7:30.)
5. It is declared to be something that is necessary. for an alien

sinner to do—"Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." "And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 9:6; 22:16.)

6. Baptism is spoken of as a part of the new birth—"the washing of regeneration." (Titus 3:5.)

7. It is declared to be a washing—"body washed with pure water." (Hebrews 10:22.)

8. Water baptism is declared to be a burial, and a resurrection—"buried with him by baptism," "buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him." (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12.)

9. It is spoken of as an institution which assists in bringing alien sinners into Christ, and by which they put on Christ—"as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27.)

10. Water baptism is declared by an inspired apostle to be an institution by which mankind are saved in regard to the conscience—"the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us . . . by the answer of a good conscience toward God." (1 Peter 3:21.)

When all the divine declarations just recorded, and enumerated, are considered in all their bearings we shall be enabled to understand that water baptism has so much conversion in it that it may be justly regarded as the crowning act of conversion. This is specially evident when we consider that those who obey Christ in water baptism must do so by faith only—pure faith—unadulterated faith, because they cannot see any use in it from an earthly viewpoint, nor even by reason's power. Water baptism, calmly and reverently submitted to, regardless of the season of the year, requires such an exercise of faith that the Apostle Peter spoke of it as conversion. Only those who are converted in mind and heart and life will submit to water baptism without excitement, without perversion, and without regard to weather. In view of all this the Apostle Peter said, "Repent and be baptized", in one discourse, and in another he said, "Repent ye therefore and be converted", when addressing the same class of persons with reference to their salvation from their past sins. In so doing he indicated that water baptism is the crowning act of alien sinners' conversion to Christ.

What is the meaning of the word "restitution", as found in the 21st verse? As a word it means "a restitution or restoration of anything to its former estate; hence, change

from worse to better, melioration, introduction of a new and better era.” But in the connection here found it means “full establishment,” or entire fulfillment. This is evident from the remainder of the chapter, for in explaining this verse Peter quotes a prophecy of Moses concerning Jesus.

In view of this what may we safely say concerning those who use the word “restitution”, in this verse, as an argument in favor of the doctrine that all mankind must be finally restored to the state in which they were in the garden of Eden? All such ignore the connection in which this word is here found, and thus ignore the idea that words are known by their connection, or relationship. Besides, the idea that mankind are to be restored to their Edenic state is purely fanciful, and certainly not very consoling. For in that state they were ignorant of evil, subject to temptation and liable to sin. The Gospel offers a better abode for the redeemed. See Revelation 21:1-4, 27.

In view of that which has just been stated concerning this verse, what is its bearing? The bearing of this verse is that the Lord Jesus Christ, who has ascended to heaven, will remain there till the time will come when all that was foretold by the Old Testament prophets concerning him and his mission will have been fully established. This embraces all that pertains to the Gospel Dispensation, and to the time when he will return to gather the redeemed to himself. See 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. The expression “these days”, in the 24th verse, clearly shows that the Apostle Peter, in the 21st verse, had reference to the Gospel Age.

What is indicated by the word “destroyed”, as found in the 23rd verse? The punishment of the wicked is indicated. For instance, God said to his ancient people while they were still in their own land, “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself!” (Hosea 13:9.) In that verse the word “destroyed” meant condemnation, and the same is true in the verse now before us. All other scriptures which bear on this question show that the word “destroyed” in this connection, and the word “destruction” in 2 Thessalonians 1:9, both refer to the condemnation of the wicked, and not that they will be blotted out of existence.

CHAPTER IV

Of what do we read in this chapter? We read of the fact that as the apostles, Peter and John, spoke to the people they were arrested, and then were put into prison where they were kept till the next day. Then we read of the fact that

they were brought forth before the high priest and others, and were questioned in regard to the authority by which they had wrought the miracle that we find recorded in the preceding chapter. The speech which the Apostle Peter made in response is next recorded, and this is followed by a record of its effect on the Jewish rulers, also of their purpose to prevent the report of the mentioned miracle from spreading among the people. What the apostles suffered, and how they regarded their suffering, also what they did, we find next recorded. The chapter is ended with a record of the oneness of heart, and of the community of goods, in the church at Jerusalem.

What may we learn by considering the 4th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the persons mentioned in that verse “heard the word” before they “believed.” Is this in harmony with all else that is recorded in the New Testament on this subject? It is. In every case of conversion to Christ recorded in the New Testament, hearing the Word preceded believing.

May not persons become believers by reading “the Word” for themselves, without hearing it proclaimed by a preacher? Yes. John 20:30,31 inform us that believers may be made by reading the divine record of Jesus. But either the ear or the eye, or both, must be the inlet of the divine testimony to the mind of mankind before they can become believers.

What is indicated in the 12th verse of this chapter? The indications are that mankind can be saved by the name of Christ, and that they cannot be saved by any other name. This is in harmony with John 14:6, and clearly implies that all efforts to approach the Father by the name of the mother of our Savior, or by any other name, is a mistake. It likewise implies that all humanly arranged and humanly given names, as religious designations, are in vain. They do not contribute to salvation in any measure nor in any degree. On the contrary, they indicate carnality. See I Corinthians 3:3, 4.

How could the Jewish rulers see that Peter and John were “unlearned and ignorant men”, as they did not show ignorance of the divine will? We are not informed, but we know that a lack of culture is generally evident in the speech of those who are not educated, even when they set forth truth with accuracy. The first Apostles had not been trained in any schools of learning, and were not accustomed to public speaking. As a result, the learned Jews could regard

them as “unlearned and ignorant men”, yet they were impressed that they had been benefitted by their association with Jesus. This suggests 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, by which we learn that God chose ignorant men in order that divine power might be made manifest in the advocacy of the Gospel.

What is suggested by the 17th verse of this chapter? Sectarianism, which in all ages of the world's history has been the same contemptible something, is here suggested. Those Jewish leaders confessed that “a notable miracle” had been done, and they knew that the greatest earthly blessing had been conferred on a man who had been lame from his birth. Yet they did not wish the report of it to “spread . . . among the people”, and in order to prevent it from spreading they threatened the apostles through whom it had been wrought. That was a fair sample of the evil spirit of sectarianism.

What is indicated by the 25th, 26th & 27th verses? Taken together they indicate that the 2nd division of the book of Psalms certainly referred to Christ, and that the prophecy that the rulers would take counsel together against the Lord and his Anointed, referred to a ruler named Herod, and Governor Pilate, with certain other rulers among the Jews.

What is implied in the 28th verse? The implication is that as it was necessary for Jesus to be put to death in behalf of man, it was therefore necessary for the rulers at Jerusalem, at the time that Jesus should die, to be wicked enough to put him to death. This conclusion does not imply that any of those rulers were compelled to be wicked enough to take part in condemning our Savior to death, for they were all at liberty to be good and to do good. But as they preferred to be wicked God chose to overrule their wickedness for the good of mankind. God had “determined” that Jesus should die for the sins of the world, but, as far as the record informs us, he had not “determined” what particular persons should cause him to die.

And what may we say of the fact that the members of the church at Jerusalem, who had possessions, sold them and put the price of them into a common treasury, that all their brethren might be as rich as they were? The fact that they did this shows that the Gospel had so overwhelmed them that their selfishness was banished from their hearts. The Jew is of a grasping disposition, and.. delights to get gain. See Hosea 12:7. But when the Gospel took possession of him it caused him to lose his love for gain, and he seemed

disposed, of his own accord, to give up his wealth by reason of his love for Christ and his brethren.

CHAPTER V

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? Information is here given of a man and his wife who told a lie in regard to the price received for their possessions, and of the judgment of God that came upon them by reason of that lie. Next we find information in regard to the end of disciples joining in the community of goods, also of the rapid advancement of the Gospel, and of the many miracles which were performed by the Apostles. Then we are informed that the Apostles were arrested and put into prison, also that they were delivered at night by an angel of God and were commanded to go into the temple and speak the words of life. The record next informs us that they went into the temple, preached, were again arrested, were tried, were beaten, were forbidden to speak in the name of Jesus, and then were suffered to depart. The chapter is ended with the declaration that “daily in the temple, and from house to house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

What may we learn by considering the record here given of a man and his wife who lied to the Holy Spirit? We may learn that the community of goods, mentioned in the last of the 2nd chapter, also in the last of the 4th chapter, was not divinely ordained, and therefore was not a duty, but was a voluntary matter on the part of the first Church at Jerusalem, and was a matter of privilege but not of duty.

In what did the lie which Ananias and his wife told, really consist? It consisted in withholding a part of the truth in regard to the price of the “possession” which they sold. They were not required to sell it, nor to put the price of it into the common treasury. This is indicated by the 4th verse. Besides, if they had decided to put only a part of the “price” of the “possession” which they had sold into the common treasury, they might have done so without offense, if they had only told the truth about it. But they deliberately decided to withhold a part of the “price”, and give a part of it, yet by silence to imply that they had given it all. This was the offense of Ananias, and that of his wife was similar. Peter declared that Ananias had “lied” “unto God”.

What effect should the record given of Ananias and his wife have on all Christians who read it? That record should fill

them all with fear in regard to the contribution and all other acts of worship. God did not require that Ananias and his wife should sell their “possession”, nor that they should put any part of the “price” of it into the common treasury of the church in Jerusalem. Yet when they withheld a part of that “price”, and pretended to put the entire “price” into that treasury, they were charged with lying unto God, and were struck with death. In view of this all Christians should consider that the Lord requires them to give as he has prospered them. (1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.) Now suppose that Christians withhold a part of their prosperity but pretend to give it all; that is, pretend to give a full proportion of their prosperity, what then? In other words, suppose that we, as Christians, give nickels and dimes on Lord's day when our prosperity enables us to give dollars, and even five and ten dollars each Lord's day,—what is our attitude in God's sight? The danger is that we are chargeable with lying unto God, and the only reason we are not struck with death is that the period for God's special judgments has been ended for a time. Then let us be careful. We are all in danger, every Lord's day, of lying unto God, by pretending to give as the Lord has prospered us but do not give thus.

What else may we learn by considering the record now before us? By considering the 3rd and 4th verses together we learn that the Holy Spirit is spoken of as God, for Ananias and his wife are charged with having lied “to the Holy Ghost”, and that offense is designated as lying “unto God”.

What is indicated in the 13th verse? The end of the disciples at Jerusalem entering into the community of goods with the Apostles, is here indicated. “Believers were the more added to the Lord”, yet they did not “join” in the common treasury. Nor do we learn that it was ever practiced among the Gentiles who were converted to Christ. In view of this what should we say to those who now contend for the community of goods in the Church, or who teach that we cannot have “the model Church” until we practice it? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God”. Neither do they know how to consider the difference between what was voluntary and what was required in the Church of Christ.

What may we learn by considering the 29th verse of this chapter? We may learn what all Christians should do when any of their fellow mortals try to prevent them from doing that which the Lord certainly requires. “We ought to obey God rather than men.” This is the right sentiment for those,

likewise, who wish to obey the Gospel as it is revealed in the New Testament.

What is indicated by the speech of Gamaliel, as set forth in the latter part of this chapter? That speech indicates that Gamaliel was a reasonable man. He did not “scorn history”, as the Jewish people generally had done. On the contrary, he referred to certain historic facts and drew a correct inference from them, and, on the basis of that inference, he gave sound advice.

What conclusion is forced on us by the record given in the last two verses of this chapter? We are ' forced to conclude that the Apostles of Christ were wholehearted in their devotion to him, and, thus, to the Gospel which he commanded them to preach.

CHAPTER VI

What may Bible readers learn in the chapter now before us? We may learn that before the community of goods was ended in the church at Jerusalem the Apostles were not able, in view of their preaching, to attend to all the “business”; which should have been done in making distribution among the widows of a certain class. We may learn also that seven men were appointed to attend to that particular “business”. The chapter is ended with mention of the preaching and miracles of one of the seven who had been appointed to look after the mentioned “business”, and of that which resulted from the “wisdom” and “spirit” which he manifested.

What may disciples of Christ learn by considering the fact that the Apostles brought the question of appointing men to look after certain temporal affairs in the church at Jerusalem before “the multitude of the disciples” in that city when they were assembled? They may learn, and should learn, the importance of consulting the church in its congregational capacity in regard to all its affairs. The Apostles, as discerners of spirits, were the best prepared of all the members of the church in Jerusalem to decide who were best qualified to serve as ministers, or deacons, in regard to temporal affairs of that church. Yet they “called the multitude of the disciples unto them”, and explained the demands of the case to them, and told them what to do in order to relieve the case, also what they would do as their own part of the work that needed to be done. “And the saying pleased the whole multitude.” Here is a record of Apostolic procedure which should never be forgotten by any preach-

er, elder, deacon, nor any other member of the Body of Christ. The Apostles were best prepared to decide on the right men for the work that should be done, yet they called together “the multitude of the disciples”, and explained to them, while they were in their assembled capacity, what the situation was and what was required. As a result, “the whole multitude” was “pleased”, and the church did what the Apostles directed to be done. This procedure should be carefully followed in all the affairs of every church, especially those affairs that are in any respect unusual. By imitating this procedure the churches will be enabled to understand how the contributions are used, and how all other affairs are conducted. As a result, peace can be maintained in every church that is free from contentious spirits, and every church which has such spirits in it will be able to handle them and keep them quiet better than by doing something in a secret manner. There are many who will be satisfied with all that is proposed if they are only consulted, but who will object strenuously if they are not consulted. If there is a contentious spirit in a church a good plan is to consult that spirit first, and not to call the congregation together till the one who has such a spirit has become reconciled to the procedure which is to be publicly proposed. Sometimes a man who possesses such a spirit should be selected to propose the question which is to be set before the congregation for decision. If a man has a peculiarity of any unfavorable kind we should try to avoid stirring it.

Who were the “Grecians”, mentioned in the 1st verse of this chapter? The 19th & 20th verses of the 11th chapter of this book indicate that they were a separate people from the Hebrews, or Jews. Some suppose they were Hebrews who had learned the Greek language.

Why are the seven men, who were chosen to serve tables in the church at Jerusalem, commonly spoken of as “deacons”? The Greek word for deacon, as used elsewhere in the New Testament, is used in this chapter to express the service which those seven men who were appointed at Jerusalem to “serve tables,” were required to perform. That Greek word means minister, of any kind, whose business it is to render service, whether temporal or spiritual.

What does the word “suborned” mean, as found in the 11th verse? It means that the men to whom it was applied had been led to take a false oath, or to testify falsely under oath. Those who could not “resist the wisdom and the spirit” by

which Stephen spoke, procured false witnesses against him. What caused them to act thus? Sectarianism.

CHAPTER VII

What is set forth in this chapter for the instruction of Bible readers? A historic discourse is here set forth, as delivered by a preacher named Stephen, in which is a brief statement of important events in the history of the Jewish nation, from the call of Abraham to the time when the discourse was delivered. The effect of that discourse on those who heard it, and the vengeance they inflicted on Stephen, we find set forth in the latter part of the chapter. The chapter ends with mention of Stephen's death.

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter? They may learn that it is the divine will for preachers of Christ to deliver historic discourses in order to instruct their hearers. Stephen was an inspired man, and he delivered that kind of a discourse. We learn also that inspiration in a preacher was not sufficient to overcome that evil something, in his hearers, known as "Sectarianism". The Jews whom Stephen addressed were sectarians, and, as a result, they were not open to conviction. As a further result, they were filled with hatred toward the one who reproved them for their sins. Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be till the end of time.

What may we learn by considering the 6th verse of this chapter? We may learn that Stephen, as an inspired preacher, spoke in perfect accord with Genesis 15:13. God said to Abraham that his descendants should be afflicted, in a strange land, "four hundred years"; and Stephen confirmed the correctness of the account which Moses gave of that which Abraham received from God on that subject. What effect should this have on those who infer that the Israelites were in Egypt only about two hundred and fifteen years? It should cause them to tremble at the danger of holding such an inference. But what should we say to those who hold that inference when they confront us with Galatians 3rd chapter and 17th verse? We should say to them that Paul in that verse refers to the time when God's promise was "confirmed", to Jacob, as recorded in Genesis 49:10, and not to the time when it was given to Abraham. That confirmation was made at the time of Jacob's death, when, by inspiration, he made a promise of Christ as a descendant of Judah.

Should Bible readers, at any time, contend for a human inference, however clear it may be, in opposition to a plain statement of divine testimony? No, and they cannot do so except by irreverence for divine testimony, and a direct violation of 1 Peter 4:11. What are the results of contending for human inferences in opposition to divine testimony? Roman Catholicism, Greek Catholicism, all phases of Protestant sectism, and all phases of religious dissension among professed disciples of Christ. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God”—this is the command which, if fully obeyed, will banish all errorism in religion from the minds of those who are sincere in their profession of belief in the Bible as God's written revelation for the religious guidance of mankind.

What is indicated in the 38th verse? The use made of the word “church” in that verse indicates that it was used with reference to the congregation of Israelites in the wilderness. The Greek word translated by the word “church,” in the New Testament, means “called out,” and, as a result, means “separated.” That word, therefore, could be justly applied to the congregation of Israelites that was “called out” of Egypt, even as it is applied to those who have been “called out” from the world by the gospel of Christ. But “the church in the wilderness” was the church that consisted of “Israel according to the flesh,” while “the Church of God” in the Gospel Age consists of Israel according to the spirit.

And what may we learn by considering the 41st verse of this chapter? We may learn that when back-slidden Israelites made “a calf,” at Mt. Sinai, to be their God, “they rejoiced in the works of their own hands,” even as back-slidden Christians, and all other religious errorists, now do when they adopt human devices in their religious worship and work. Stephen's declaration, that the Israelites “rejoiced in the works of their own hands,” when they “made a calf “ and had “offered sacrifice unto the idol,” is an index to that which erring religionists have ever since been doing. With one accord they have “rejoiced in the works of their own hands” when they have framed and adopted humanisms in religious affairs.

What is indicated in the 51st verse? The fact that when the Jews resisted the word spoken to them by the Old Testament prophets they resisted the Holy Spirit, is here indicated. What is here indicated is plainly stated in Nehemiah 9:30.

What is implied in the 53rd verse? The implication is that

God gave his law to Moses through angels. Galatians 3:19 is evidence in this direction, and this evidence is in perfect harmony with Exodus 3:2, also 23:20-23.

What may we say of Stephen's prayer, as recorded in the last verse of this chapter? We may say that his prayer was like unto that of the Savior, as recorded in Luke 23:34, and was in obedience to Matthew 5:44. The Savior exemplified his own teaching when he prayed for his enemies who crucified him, and Stephen, the first martyr for Christ, followed the Savior's example when he prayed for those who killed him. All Christians should consider these examples and follow them at all times.

CHAPTER VIII

Of what are Bible readers informed in the chapter now before us? We are first informed that a certain man, named Saul, consented unto the death of Stephen, then that there was "great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem." Next we read of Stephen's burial, and of Saul's success in persecuting the church. An account of a preacher named Philip, going into Samaria, is next given, also of his work there, and this is followed by an account of certain apostles, Peter and John, going into Samaria, and confirming Philip's work there. In connection with this is an account given of a certain man named Simon, who thought that "the gift of God" might be "purchased with money." In the latter part of this chapter is a record of the conversion of a certain Ethiopian, by means of the preaching of Philip, and this is followed by a statement of more preaching that was done by Philip.

When Saul consented to the death of Stephen did he not become a participant, or partaker, in the crime of murdering Stephen? He certainly did, and in Acts 26:10 we learn that his consent to the death of Christians was not simply a secret assent, but it was an overt declaration. He gave his "voice against" those who were put to death. Does not this at least intimate that murder is not an unpardonable sin, and that murderers may repent and be saved? It does. Besides, the offer of salvation made to those who had clamored for the Savior's death, as that offer is recorded in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of this book, intimates the same. But did not Saul say of himself that he persecuted the Church through ignorance? He thus wrote in 1 Timothy 1:3, and Peter thus declared concerning the Jews in Acts 3:17. At the same time the statement may be safely made that the crime of

murder was, probably, never committed by any one who was not ignorant of the sacredness of human life, as that sacredness is indicated in Genesis 9:6. Man bears “the image” of God, and in this is found the sacredness of human life, and the basis for capital punishment. Those who understand this will not commit murder, nor will they oppose capital punishment.

What may we learn by considering the 2nd verse of this chapter? We may learn that it is right for Christians to have burial exercises, even funeral speeches, or discourses.

Were the disciples who “were scattered abroad” discouraged by reason of the persecution inflicted on them? No. The 4th verse of this chapter indicates that they turned the fact that they were persecuted to good account, for they “went everywhere preaching the word.”

What should persecuted disciples now do? They should follow the example of those who were scattered abroad from Jerusalem. How do they often act in this generation? They often suffer themselves to become discouraged, and yield to the devices of their persecutors or settle down into a complaining, or indifferent, condition of life, and prepare themselves to be finally rejected as unfaithful servants. This is all wrong. With one accord persecuted Christians should turn to good account the persecutions they suffer.

Who were the Samaritans to whom Philip preached? They were, originally, heathen. Their existence in the land of the Jews is first recorded in the 17th chapter of the second Book of Kings. But by reason of their relation to the Jews they rejected heathenism and became worshipers of the only true God. In that respect they made a good record. See John 4th chapter.

Was Simon, the Samaritan “sorcerer,” really converted to Christ, when he “believed” and “was baptized”? There are several evidences that he was really converted. First of all the record says that he “believed” and “was baptized,” without the slightest intimation that he was not sincere. In the absence of all other evidence this should be sufficient to convince us that he was really converted to Christ. Next we learn that “he continued with Philip,” which implies that there was something in the religion which he had professed which interested him. Moreover, when he sinned by thinking that “the gift of God” might “be purchased with money,” and was rebuked for his sin, the apostle who rebuked him did not intimate that he had not been real-

ly converted to Christ. On the contrary, that apostle only spoke to Simon as if he was in danger by reason of one sin, namely, thinking that “the gift of God” could “be purchased with money.” Finally, after Simon had been rebuked he requested the Apostles to pray for him, and thereby gave the best possible evidence that he was humble, and sincere, much more so than many who affirm that he was not sincere when he was baptized. Those who thus affirm concerning him, as a rule, become angry when they are reproved for their sin, even if reproved in a much gentler manner than the Apostle Peter reproved Simon, the Samaritan.

What else may we learn by considering the account here given of Simon the Samaritan? We may learn that the law of pardon for the erring Christian differs from the law of pardon for the alien sinner. In chapter 2:38 the Apostle Peter said to alien sinners, “Repent and be baptized,” but in the 22nd verse of this chapter he said to an erring Christian, “Repent . . . and pray.”

In view of that which has just been stated, what should we say to those who attempt to discard the divinely ordained relation of baptism to remission of sins by saying that if it is a condition of remission then every time a Christian sins he will need to be baptized again? We should say to all who make such attempt that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” We need not impeach their profession of honesty, but may safely impeach their pretensions to know the Scriptures. For the divine record, as given in chapters 2:38, and 8:22, of this book, clearly shows that there are two laws of pardon, one for the alien sinner, and the other for the erring Christian. Repentance and baptism are required of the alien, while repentance and prayer are required of the erring believer. When that law for the alien is fully stated, it is set forth thus: Faith in Christ, repentance of all sins, confession of faith, and baptism. When the law of pardon for the erring Christian is fully stated it is set forth thus: Faith in Christ, repentance of all sins, confession of wrong, and prayer. The confession of wrongs, or “faults,” is commanded in James 5:16. In view of the plainness of all this certainly those who try to discard the idea, that baptism is necessary to the pardon of alien sinners because of the supposed absurdity of baptizing Christians as often as they sin, are guilty of an absurdity which reflects seriously on the head, and perhaps the heart, of every one who holds it. There are two laws of pardon—one for the alien sinner and the other is for the erring Christian, This is clear, and easy to be understood.

Those laws both require faith in Christ and repentance of sins. But the former also requires confession of faith and baptism, while the latter also requires confession of faults and prayer. This can be easily understood by all who will consider it with care, and with reverence for God's word.

What bestowment of the Holy Spirit was made when Peter and John, as Apostles, laid their hands on the Samaritan converts, who are mentioned in this chapter? We are not definitely informed; but the 18th verse implies that the bestowment made on that occasion was something that could be discerned either in itself or by its effects. Moreover, Acts 19:6 informs us that when Paul laid hands on certain baptized believers “the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.” This indicates what Simon “saw,” when Peter and John laid hands on the converts in Samaria, as certainly as that the Holy Spirit was uniform in his operations. The gift of tongues was seen on the day of Pentecost (chapter 2:3, 4), and was “heard” at the house of Cornelius, and at Ephesus. See chapters 10:46; 19:6. Direct testimony and clear implication, therefore, unite in setting forth four instances of speaking with tongues; that is, speaking languages that had not been learned by those who spoke them. Then in 1 Corinthians 14:22 we are informed concerning God's purpose in bestowing the gift of tongues.

In view of all this that has just been submitted concerning the Holy Spirit's manifestations in the New Testament Church, and the purpose of God in causing these manifestations to be made, what should we say to those who now teach that the Lord now baptizes persons with the Holy Spirit in order to make them Christians? We should say to them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.” Romans 1:16 informs us that “the gospel of Christ” is God's' power unto salvation, and this does not mean that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that power. It is true that the Gospel was preached and written in its fulness by those who were baptized with the Holy Spirit Bent down from heaven. See 1 Peter 1:12. Therefore we have in the written Gospel the results of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as far as revealing the Gospel is concerned. Yet the Gospel as revealed is now God's power to save, and not the baptism of the Holy Spirit in its actuality. We are saved by the results of that baptism if we learn, and believe, and obey the Gospel wholeheartedly. But the baptism itself, which was evident by the gift of tongues to convince unbelievers, does not now continue—is not now bestowed.

But is there any bestowment, or impartation, of the Holy Spirit now made on any one? The only impartation now made is that mentioned in the last part of Acts 2:38, and that impartation is in Romans 8:15 designated “the Spirit of adoption,” and in Galatians 4:6 it is declared to be “the Spirit of his Son,” which means the Spirit of Christ. But that impartation was not intended to save sinners, nor to take the place of studying the Scriptures on the part of saints. On the contrary, it was intended to enable those who obey the Gospel to address God as their Father with an assurance which they could not otherwise have.

What may we learn by considering the record given in the latter part of this chapter of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch? We may learn how a Jewish proselyte—a man of another nation who had become a worshiper according to the Jewish faith—was converted to Christ, and may thus learn what is necessary in the conversion of all other worshipers of God who have not become Christians.

Was the man of Ethiopia of whom we read in this chapter certainly a man of another nation? Yes. The Greek text of the 27th verse informs us that this man was an Ethiopian; not simply “a man of Ethiopia” as the Common Version declares, but “an Ethiopian man.” Therefore he was not as some suppose, a Jew who had attained prominence in Ethiopia, but he was strictly an Ethiopian.

Do we find anything unusual in the conduct of this Ethiopian? Yes. He earnestly desired to know the will of God, and searched the Sacred Text that was in his possession in order to learn that will. What was unusual in this? Mankind, generally, are indifferent concerning God's will, and many who desire to know it are too lazy to search the Scriptures in order to learn what that will is, and thus learn what it requires. But this Ethiopian hungered and thirsted after divine righteousness, and he was filled with that righteousness.

Was this Ethiopian's conduct unusual in any other particular? Yes. He showed, by that which he said and did, that he was willing to learn of a stranger, and of one who was beneath him in worldly position. This indicates that he was willing to learn of any one who could teach him in regard to the will of God. Multitudes of religious persons are only willing to learn of those who are of their sect or party, or are of their rank in this world.

What is referred to by the expression “judgment was taken away,” as recorded in the 33rd verse? The Greek word

translated “judgment” in this expression is often translated “condemnation,” “judgment” and that is its meaning in this instance, Jesus was not condemned on testimony, for after Pilate had examined all the witnesses that were brought against him he said, “I find no fault in him.” (John 19:4.) Yet he condemned Jesus by reason of the clamor that was raised. Therefore justice was perverted, and the sentence of condemnation was extorted from Pilate. This is the idea, and should be the translation. “In his humiliation his condemnation was extorted.”

What is indicated by the 34th verse? Humility. By the question recorded in that verse the man of Ethiopia showed the humility of a child, and illustrated the humility which all mankind should have, 'especially in regard to religion. See Matthew 18:1-4.

What is implied concerning the preaching which Philip did to the Ethiopian? When we consider the 35th and 36th verses together the implication is that in preaching Jesus the man Philip preached the doctrine of Jesus, and thus made known to the Ethiopian the importance of being baptized in water.

What may we say of the 37th verse of this chapter? Its necessity is implied by the question found in the last of the 36th verse, and it is in harmony with Matthew 10:32, also Romans 10:10. Why then do some persons reject that verse? They say it is not found in certain of the oldest manuscripts of the Book of Acts. Have we any reason for retaining it beyond the fact that its existence is implied by the eunuch's question? Yes. In the Ante Nicene Library, Vol. I, American Reprint of the Edinburgh Edition, page 433, paragraph 8, under the heading “Irenaeus Against Heresy,” we find testimony which ought to settle this question. Irenaeus was a pupil of Polycarp, and Polycarp was a personal learner of the Apostle John. He wrote in the Second Century, and in regard to the eunuch's confession he expressed himself thus:

But again: Whom did Philip preach to the eunuch of the queen of the Ethiopians, returning from Jerusalem, and reading Esaias the prophet, when he and this man were alone together? Was it not He of whom the prophet spoke: “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb dumb before the shearer, so he opened not his mouth?” “But who shall declare His nativity? for his life shall be taken away from the earth.” [Philip declared] that this was Jesus, and that the scripture was fulfilled in Him; as did also the believing eunuch himself: and immediately requesting to be baptized said, “I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God.”

What is indicated concerning the baptism of the eunuch, as it is recorded in the 38th and 39th verses? The indication is that he was immersed, because neither sprinkling nor pour-

ing would have made it necessary for both Philip and the eunuch to go down into the water. Is this indication in harmony with other testimony in the New Testament concerning baptism? It is. John the Baptist baptized “in the river of Jordan,” and Paul wrote in Romans 6:4, saying, “We are buried with him by baptism into death.” In Hebrews 10:22 he wrote also of “having . . . our bodies washed with pure water.” These, and other scriptures, clearly indicate that immersion is the baptism authorized by the New Testament.

What should we say to those who declare that they can not decide which of the two men who “went down into the water” was baptized, as the 38th verse says, “and he baptized him”? We should ask them which of those two men wished to be baptized? Besides, we should also ask them whether the order of the words “both Philip and the eunuch” as recorded before the declaration, “and he baptized him,” does not clearly show who did the baptizing. When ordinary common sense, and common honesty, are exercised in considering the record of the Ethiopian eunuch's conversion, there can be but one conclusion in regard to it. The record is clear to all who are willing to learn, and clear to all who have the degree of humility possessed by the Ethiopian whose conversion to Christ is therein set forth. We are first informed of that which an angel of the Lord said to a certain preacher named Philip. Next we are informed of that which Philip did, and of what he saw. Then the record informs us of what the Spirit said to Philip, also of what he did in obedience to the Spirit, of what he heard and said, likewise of what he was invited to do by the man to whom he had spoken. The place in the Scripture where that man was reading is next set before us, also the question which that man asked, and of the preaching which Philip did. Then mention is made of that man's faith, confession of faith, and obedience, and rejoicing. All this is set forth in a manner so plain that the 33rd verse is the only one that needs a word of comment in order to unfold its meaning to the ordinary reader.

What may we say of the declaration, “and he went on his way rejoicing,” as found in the last of the 39th verse? We may say that the eunuch rejoiced at the right time. Philip did not tell him to repent and pray till he would feel happy before his baptism, and after his baptism he did not need to inform him that the time had come for him to rejoice. But he believed, confessed, was baptized in water, and then “he went on his way rejoicing.” Thus it was in the conversion

of the Ethiopian eunuch, and thus it should be in the conversions of all persons who now become Christians. The doctrine that water baptism is not necessary to salvation, and that persons should repent and pray till they feel that their sins are forgiven before they are fit to be baptized, is all erroneous. The Lord has provided salvation in his own divine way, and he offers it to us on his own divinely appointed terms. If we earnestly desire to be saved we should be careful to conform to the divine terms, and when we conform to them, then we can go on our way rejoicing even as the Ethiopian eunuch did. But if we are not in earnest about our salvation, then we may feel like trifling with the divinely appointed terms of salvation. In other words, if we hunger and thirst after divine righteousness, then we are anxious to secure that righteousness even as the Lord ordained. Moreover, if we humble ourselves as little children, we show the disposition which the Ethiopian eunuch did. As a result, we are willing to learn from any one who can teach us, and, as a further result, we shall be led in the way of life everlasting.

CHAPTER IX

What is set forth in this chapter for the information of those who read the Bible? We are informed in regard to Saul of Tarsus, as a persecutor of the church in Jerusalem, also of the fact that he obtained letters from the high priest to a city named Damascus in order that he might persecute the disciples who were there. We are next informed of the fact that Jesus appeared to him while he was on his way to Damascus, of the interview which he had with Jesus, of what he was told to do, of what he did, also of what a preacher of Christ named Ananias was told with reference to him. Then we find a record of Saul's obedience in baptism, of the fact that he received something to eat, and then of the fact that he began to preach Christ in Damascus. Next we read of the fact that his life was in danger at Damascus, and that he went to Jerusalem, of the reception which he met with while there, also of his departure to Tarsus. Mention of the rest which the churches of Christ then had is next recorded. A record of the Apostle Peter, and of his works at a place named Lydda, and at another named Joppa, is given in the latter part of this chapter.

Why did Saul of Tarsus persecute the church of Christ at Jerusalem, and desire to persecute it even in another city? In chapter 26:9-11 he informs us. Why have others per-

secuted the Church of Christ since Saul's record has been written? They have persecuted it for the same reason that he did. He "verily thought" with himself that he ought to, do so, and because he was "exceedingly mad" against the Church. Did he know that he was doing wrong? No. He did' so "ignorantly in unbelief," and thus he did so "in all good conscience. " See 1 Timothy 1:13; Acts 23:1. Is it possible for persons to persecute the Church of Christ now "in all good conscience"? Yes. But it is possible only when. they are in "ignorance and unbelief." Are persons excusable for living "in ignorance and unbelief" concerning the Church of Christ as it is now established among mankind? We are not informed, and should not speculate. The Lord knows. Let us be careful to avoid wilful ignorance.

What is meant by the last of the 5th verse of this chapter? It is a reference to an Eastern custom of goading an ox, or a donkey, onward by means of a sharp instrument. When the beast that was thus goaded would "kick," instead of going forward, and thus showed rebellion against his master, the goading was, generally, renewed, and that inflicted more suffering on the beast. Reference was made to this because Saul was rebelling against the divine Master's will, as his rebellion was indicated by the persecution he inflicted on the church, and the Savior intimated that the more he rebelled the worse it would be for him. The same is true of all others who rebel against their divine Master.

Why did not Jesus tell Saul fully what he should do? We are not informed except by implication. He had committed the preaching of the Gospel to men, and he did not propose to take it away from them even in one instance. In view of this, what may we say of those who now declare that the Savior spoke to them directly from heaven and told them what to do? They make a mistake. But suppose they tell us that they saw a light above the brightness of the sun, even as Saul did, what should we then say? We should refer them to chapter 26:16, and thereby show them that Jesus appeared to Saul in order to make him "a minister And a witness." Then we should remind them that Saul was the last of the chosen witnesses. In view of all this, we should inform those who declare that they saw a light, as Saul did, that they cannot show, as Saul afterwards did, that Jesus ever intended to make them ministers and witnesses. As a result their declaration on that subject is without evidence to sustain it, and should be charged to their imagination.

And what may we say of the 7th verse of this chapter in the light of what is stated in the 22nd chapter and 9th verse? The word here translated “hearing,” means also “to understand,” and thus these two verses are in harmony when properly considered. Chapter 22:9 indicates that those who were with Saul understood not the voice of him who spoke. An illustration of this is recorded in John 12:28-30. The people that “stood by” heard the voice that spoke to Jesus, but did not understand what it said. Some thought “it thundered”; others said, “An angel spake to him.” To hear a voice is always possible without understanding what that voice says.

What may we conclude from Saul's conduct at Damascus? The fact that he abstained from eating and drinking for three days implies that he was deeply concerned. Then the fact that he prayed implies that he did not know what else to do. Did the Lord answer his prayer? We are not informed in regard to that which he prayed for, and should not speculate. That the Lord did not pardon his sins while he was praying is indicated by chapter 22:16. But what shall we say to those who teach that Christ pardoned Saul's sins in reality when he first believed, and pardoned them formally when he was baptized? We should inform them that such teaching is purely fanciful, and without the slightest foundation in any record of conversion to Christ that is found in the New Testament. Under the Jewish law there was an actual cleansing of leprosy, and then a legal cleansing. See Leviticus 14th chapter. But the doctrine that mankind are saved from sin by an actual pardon, and then by a legal pardon, is strictly of human origin. There is not even an intimation in its favor in the Gospel. Jesus did not say, He that believes is actually pardoned, but he must be baptized in order to be legally pardoned. On the contrary he said, “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.”

Does the fact that Saul had a vision of Ananias coming to him before he was baptized imply that he was pardoned? No: for the fact that Caiaphas was inspired to speak a true prophecy does not indicate that his sins were pardoned; and the fact that the wife of Pilate suffered many things in a dream because of Jesus, does not indicate that her sins were pardoned. See Matthew 27:19; John 11:49-51.

Does the fact that Saul was a “chosen vessel” unto Jesus mean that he was chosen unto eternal life? It does not. The expression “chosen vessel” implies that he was chosen to be an apostle, as the latter part of the 15th verse informs us.

Moreover, in 1 Corinthians 9:27 we learn that the Apostle Paul found it necessary to keep his body under in order to keep himself from being cast away, even after he had done his work as an apostle.

What is indicated in the 26th verse of this chapter? The verse indicates that Saul endeavored to be in some manner formally “joined” to the disciples at Jerusalem. What does this imply? It implies that for disciples after their baptism to be thus “joined” to each other was common among disciples in those days. This is in harmony with chapter 2:41, 47.

Was Saul's life in danger at Jerusalem? It was. As soon as he became a Christian he advocated the divinity of Christ with such boldness that he was persecuted, and by reason of his boldness he was persecuted during the remainder of his life, and, finally, was put to death.

What may we learn by the record given in the latter part of this chapter of the Apostle Peter, and of his work at Lydda? Peter was used by the Lord to work a notable miracle there, and, as a result, the people at Lydda, and a place named Saron, generally, “turned to the Lord.” This indicates the effect of a miracle, especially a miracle which relieves an afflicted person. Mankind, generally, can be touched with a deed of benevolence, and for this reason all Christians should show benevolence toward their fellow mortals. We can not work miracles, nor do anything else beyond what is ordinary, yet by ordinary deeds of kindness we may impress mankind in favor of the Gospel. We can always do this by showing the kindness and forbearance which is necessary to keep “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The Savior's prayer, as recorded in John 17:20-23, shows that believers in him must be united in order that the people of the world may be converted to him. The oneness of believers may therefore be regarded as the standing miracle by which mankind may be converted to Christ. In order that this standing miracle may be manifest among mankind, much forbearance, kindness, benevolence, must be shown by disciples of Christ toward each other.

What may we learn by considering the miracle wrought through the Apostle Peter at a place named Joppa? We may learn that the power to raise the dead was, in this instance, manifested through the Apostle Peter. This shows that raising the dead was not confined to the Savior, but that the power to raise the dead could be manifested through an apostle of the Savior,

In view of the miracles, that are recorded in the latter part of this chapter, what may we say of the so-called miracles of certain modern pretenders? There is not the slightest comparison between those miracles and these pretensions, but there is a bold contrast. Eneas had been bedfast eight years with the palsy, but was healed immediately when the Apostle Peter spake to him. Dorcas was dead and prepared for burial, but in response to a divine command, given through the Apostle Peter, she opened her eyes, and then arose. Such miracles are beyond comparison with any, and all, of the modern alleged miracles, performed by certain pretenders.

What should we say to those who found a sewing society on the fact that Dorcas made garments, and name it "Dorcas Society"? We should say that the example of Dorcas, and that which the Lord did for her, should prevent all disciples from even thinking of such a society. She did her good works as an individual, and the Lord was pleased to raise her to life after she had died and her body had been prepared for burial. In all this there is not the slightest intimation in favor of a sewing society, but a strong implication against it. Dorcas did her deeds of benevolence as an individual disciple; she was highly esteemed by her sisters in Christ; and the Lord raised her from the dead after she had died.

But would it be wrong for sisters to meet and sew in making garments for the poor without forming a society? No. It would not be wrong if they would not make a wrong out of it by talking too much, or finding fault with each other's work. The silence of the New Testament concerning such a meeting, likewise observation and experience all suggest that the sisters should avoid such meetings.

CHAPTER X

What are the outlines of this chapter? A record is here given of a man named Cornelius, and of his conversion to Christ through the preaching of the Apostle Peter.

What was the religious character of Cornelius? It was that of a Jewish proselyte of the best kind. He was an officer in the army of heathen Rome, but had learned to believe in the God of heaven and earth, and had become a devoted worshiper of God, and was earnestly disposed to please God by deeds of benevolence. Moreover, God sent an angel to assure him 'that his prayers and benevolent deeds had come

to the divine notice, and were approved in heaven, also to instruct him in regard to that which he should do in order to learn what he ought to do, or to “hear words” which would tell him what to do in order to be saved. See 6th and 22nd verses, also chapter 11:14.

What are the unavoidable conclusions from such a record? We are impelled to believe that a man may be the best kind of a man religiously, according to the Jewish law, and yet not be a Christian, also that right “words”—” words” divinely ordained to save—have salvation in them; and, finally, that all indifference concerning such “words” is contrary to the divine will.

What does all this indicate in regard to all other good persons? It indicates that persons may be good without being Christians. They may even believe in Christ without being Christians, if they have not learned the “words” which are necessary in order to become Christians, and obeyed them.

When did the Apostle Peter finish speaking the “words” which it was necessary for Cornelius to hear, and when did he tell him what he “ought to do”? He finished those “words,” and told him what he “ought to do” when he commanded him to be baptized with water. See verses 47 and 48.

What was God's purpose in the vision which he caused Peter to behold while he was on the housetop at Joppa? The 28th verse of this chapter informs us that the divine purpose in that vision was to convince Peter that he “should not call any man common or unclean,” though the Jews thus regarded the Gentiles, and thereby convince him that he should not hesitate to go to the house of a Gentile when invited to do so.

What may we learn by reading the 26th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the Apostle Peter was not disposed to suffer any one to worship him, and this suggests Revelation 22:9.

What is indicated by the disposition of Cornelius, as he mentioned it, in the 33rd verse? He was anxious to hear the Apostle Peter, and even to “hear all things” which God had commanded him to make known. And what would be the result if all mankind, who are privileged to hear the Gospel, would show the disposition that Cornelius did? The world of mankind would soon be converted to Christ.

What should we say to those who base the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, by faith only, on the 43rd verse of this chapter?

We should refer them to Hebrews 11th chapter, and advise them to read that chapter till they learn what faith is, and what it must be in order to be acceptable to God. For when they will have learned the divine definition and illustrations of faith they will know that the doctrine of remission of sins by faith only is a falsehood. An illustration of faith only is recorded in John 12:42, 43, and the Jews who possessed such faith are a fair illustration of all those who try to be saved by faith without the obedience which acceptable faith requires, and which is inseparably connected with such faith as God approves. In view of all this the conclusion is unavoidable that the word “believeth” in the 43rd verse of this chapter embraces all the obedience which was necessary to manifest what that word means.

But why did the Holy Ghost descend upon Cornelius and his household before they were baptized with water? The correct answer to this question will be evident as soon as we consider that the evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence in them was their ability to “speak with tongues,” and then consider the purpose of the gift of tongues as recorded in 1st Corinthians 14:22. That purpose was to produce faith in unbelievers. But who were the unbelievers that needed to be convinced at that time? The answer to this question is found in the 17th and 18th verses of the 11th chapter. The Apostle Peter may have needed the evidence given by the gift of tongues, as bestowed on that occasion, and so may the “six brethren” who accompanied him to the house of Cornelius. But the Jewish brethren at Jerusalem specially needed it. They did not believe that the Gentiles were Gospel subjects, and censured Peter for going among them, and eating with them. But when they heard the Apostle Peter's account of the reason he went among them, and the evidence that God gave his acceptance of them, as Gospel subjects, then their unbelief on that subject was banished, and “they glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

In view of all that we have just considered, what should we say to those who declare that the Holy Spirit was sent upon Cornelius and his friends in order to make them Christians, or to show that they were Christians? We should answer them by referring to 1 Corinthians 14:22, and insisting that the Lord knew his purpose in baptizing Cornelius, and his household, better than we do. We should also insist that 1 Peter 4:11 should be observed, and, thus, end all controversy on the subject. The gift of tongues was intended to

convince unbelievers, and not to convince those who received that gift. They were for the benefit of others rather than for the benefit of those on whom they were bestowed, “Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.” (1 Corinthians 14:22.) Thus it is written; thus it remains; and thus it should be accepted without controversy.

What great difference is set forth in the 47th and 48th verses, between the Apostle Peter and many modern preachers? The Apostle Peter regarded a real baptism of the Holy Spirit as evidence in favor of water baptism, but many modern preachers regard an imaginary baptism of the Holy Spirit as evidence against water baptism. Peter reasoned thus: “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” But many modern preachers reason thus: “Why should any man think that water baptism can do persons any good who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost”—as we imagine. If any of this class of preachers had been present when Peter asked the question recorded in the 47th verse of this chapter they would have said, “Water baptism can not benefit those who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Such at least is the doctrine of many preachers in modern time. But the fact that the Apostle Peter, as an inspired man, regarded Spirit baptism as a reason for water baptism, in a case where Spirit baptism had been really conferred to convince a certain kind of unbelievers, will be sufficient to condemn all who ignore baptism because of an imaginary Spirit baptism. The chief evidence of genuine Spirit baptism is lacking in every instance of so-called Spirit baptism of modern times. Not one of those who profess to have been baptized by the Holy Spirit can speak languages they have never learned, and this should be sufficient to make them ashamed of such profession.

But what should we say to those who insist that as Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before water baptism, therefore all Gentile converts should now receive the Spirit before water baptism? We should inform them that they might as well insist that an angel should appear to every Gentile and tell him where to send for a preacher, and that every preacher should see a vision as Peter did. There were four miracles in connection with the conversion of Cornelius,—the appearance of an angel, Peter's vision, the speech which the Spirit made to Peter, and the bestowment of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his household. But we should not contend for one of these miracles any more than for the others.

CHAPTER XI

What do we find in this chapter to edify Bible readers? In the former part of this chapter we find a record of an interview between the Apostles and other Christians in Judea, on the one hand, and the Apostle Peter, and certain brethren, on the other hand, because Peter had gone among Gentiles, and had eaten with them. Then in the latter part of this chapter we find mention of what those did who had been scattered abroad from Jerusalem, and of the results accomplished by that which they did, and by the help which the Lord gave to them in their work. Next we find mention of what the church at Jerusalem did in regard to that which was accomplished by the preaching of those who were scattered abroad when they heard thereof. In course of this record a man named Barnabas is mentioned, and the fact that he sought for Saul, and that they both labored at a place named Antioch, also of the name which the disciples received at Antioch. The chapter is ended with a record of a certain prophet, who came to Antioch, of what he said, and of the determination which his prophecy caused the brethren there to have, and of the fact that they fulfilled that determination when the proper time came.

Why were the Jews prepossessed against the Gentiles? The law which God had given to them required that they should keep themselves separated from the Gentiles. See Deuteronomy 12:1-3; Judges 2:1, 2. Separation from the Gentiles was necessary in order to keep from their idols. By reason of what the Lord required in regard to separation from the Gentiles the Jews drew the inference that they were above them, and better than they were. They even inferred that the Gentiles were "unclean," which was true from the viewpoint of the Jewish law. As a result much care and several miracles were necessary in order to break down the Jewish prepossessions against the Gentiles, and to cause them to acknowledge that the Gentiles had a right to hear and obey the Gospel.

What effect should the 14th verse of this chapter have on all Bible readers? It should cause them to believe that the "words" of the Lord have in them power to save, and this should prevent all Bible readers from speaking of the Sacred Text as "the mere word," "the bare word" and "the dead letter of the word."

And what effect should the entire record of the interview between the Apostle Peter and the brethren at Jerusalem

have on all Bible readers? It should cause them to understand why it was necessary for the miracles recorded in the preceding chapter to be performed, and should prevent all of them from contending for any one of those miracles to be performed in connection with the conversion of any person in the fulness of the Gospel Age.

What may we learn by considering the 16th verse? It offers what is recorded, as the words of Jesus, in chapter 1:5, and as the word “fire” is not mentioned in either verse, therefore, the “fire” mentioned in Matthew 3:11 was not intended for the obedient. This conclusion is clearly indicated by the use made of the word “fire” in Matthew 3:10-12.

What is implied by the reference made to the “Grecians” in the 20th verse? The implication is that the word “Grecians” referred to those who were Greeks, though some suppose they were Jews of foreign birth and Greek education.

What may we learn by considering the length of time that Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, as mentioned ' in the 26th verse? We may learn that preachers of Christ may now remain in one place a long time without becoming “pastors.” The chief question concerning a preacher in regard to any place is, What has he been doing? or, What is he doing? or, What is he going to do? This should be considered, and not the length of time he has remained or will remain there. Very few evangelists have remained as long at a place as they were needed to instruct a church aright.

What may we say of the name that was given to the disciples at Antioch? It is in harmony with Isaiah 62:2; 65:15. The former of those prophecies makes mention of “a new name,” and the latter of “another name.” The “new name” Isaiah declared should be given when the Gentiles should see the divine “righteousness,” and the name mentioned as “another name” should be given when the name of the Jewish nation should be “for a curse.” The divine decision to scatter the Jewish nation had been rendered before the Gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles. See Matthew 23:37, 38; 24:1, 2. The “new name” of which Isaiah prophesied could not have been the name “disciples,” for that is found in the Old Testament. (Isaiah 8:16.) Neither could it have been the name “saints,” for that also is found in the Old Testament. In Psalm 16:3 and many other places the word “saints” is used by Old Testament writers. The word “brethren” is also common in the Old Testament. This means that the “new name,” of which Isaiah prophesied, must be found in the word “Christians”

as applied to the disciples of the first Gentile church of which we are informed. Therefore the name “Christians” is divinely ordained, and should be accepted, by all Bible readers, as a divinely authorized name.

What should we answer to those who teach that “the disciples were called Christians,” by their enemies, at Antioch, and that the name thus given was accepted by the disciples? We should answer that such teaching is without divine authority, and is contrary to that authority. The Greek word here translated “called” means “to have dealings, transact, business; to negotiate; to give answer on deliberation.” In the New Testament it means, “to be divinely instructed, receive a revelation or warning; to receive an appellation be styled.” In view of such meanings, or shades of meaning, the word here translated “called” certainly means called by divine authority, and not by derisive enemies. Ephesians 3:14, 15 confirm this conclusion, for by taking those scriptures together we learn that Christ named the family of which he is the head.

What may we learn by considering the last verse of this chapter? We may learn that “the elders” at Jerusalem had something to do with the financial affairs of the church there, and, in view of this, we should not conclude that it is now wrong for a church to appoint an elder to be its treasurer, if he should seem to be the most suitable person for that position. The elders at Jerusalem were, for a time, at least, the treasurers of the church there. This is not in conflict with that which is recorded in the 6th chapter of this book, but it indicates that either an elder or a deacon may be selected as treasurer, and therefore we should not be contentious on that question.

CHAPTER XII

What is recorded in this chapter? A record is first given of what a certain ruler named Herod did, and what he proposed to do against the church. Then we read of what the church did, and of what the Lord did in behalf of the church by delivering the Apostle Peter from prison. Next we read of Peter's return to the church while it was praying for him, and of what he then said and did. The chapter then records an account of that which Herod did, of what certain persons ascribed to him, and of his death. The chapter is ended with mention of the success of the Gospel, and of what certain preachers did.

What does the Greek word, in the 4th verse, which is translated by the word “Easter,” mean? It means “passover,” which referred to the Jewish feast that was kept to commemorate the last night that the Jews spent in Egypt, when the destroying angel passed over their habitations. But whence came the word “Easter,” which we find in the Common Version of this verse? The word “Easter,” or Eastre, was the name of a certain heathen goddess, who was celebrated by a feast held about the time of the Jewish passover. Under the reign of Roman Catholicism the union of the Jewish passover and a heathen feast was made into a religious feast supposed to be Christian by many who don't understand the Gospel.

What is indicated in the 15th verse of this chapter? The Lord had done more in regard to Peter than his brethren at the house to which he went were expecting. James, the brother of John, had been killed by Herod, and as Peter was in prison his brethren were left to conclude that he also would be killed. But the Lord did more for them in delivering Peter from prison than they were really expecting. As a result they thought that the young woman was “mad” who affirmed that Peter was at the door.

What may we learn by considering the 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter? We may learn that God is jealous for his own honor, even as Isaiah 42:8 declares. He does not divide honors with any one, nor did he, anciently, suffer any man to presume to be a God. In view of this what should we conclude concerning those who wear the name “Reverend” as a title, when we consider the use made of that name in the 9th verse of the 111th Psalm? We should conclude that they are in danger. And what should we say of the titles assumed by the pope of Rome? They are presumptuous in the highest degree—even sacrilegious. What are those titles? Here are a few of them: “Sovereign Pontiff Vicar of Christ Head of the Church,” “Holy Father.”

CHAPTER XIII

What is set forth for our learning in this chapter? Mention of certain “prophets and teachers” in the church at Antioch, is here set forth, and what the Holy Spirit did in regard to Saul and Barnabas, also what they did in obedience to the Holy Spirit's command. Then we find mention of that which Saul and Barnabas did in regard to preaching, and of what Saul did in regard to a certain man who withstood

him and Barnabas in their preaching, and mention is then made of the result of what was done by Saul, whose name was also called Paul. We next find mention made of the fact that Paul and his company went on their way, but that one of his company returned to Jerusalem. The fact that they went to a place called "Antioch" in a country named "Pisidia" is next mentioned, also that which Paul said in one of the synagogues of the Jews while at that place. The favorable disposition of the Gentiles, and the unfavorable disposition of the Jews, in regard to the word which Paul preached, we find mentioned in the latter part of this chapter.

Did Saul work any miracles before his name was changed to Paul? The record does not inform us that he did, and, therefore, we should not conclude that he wrought any. What is the difference between the names Saul and Paul? The name "Saul" means "wished," and the name "Paul" means "small." Why was Saul's name changed to Paul? We are not informed, and should not speculate. Yet there is something significant in the fact that he was ever afterwards called Paul, except in quoting what was said to him before his name was changed.

What may we say of the character of the first miracle wrought through Paul? It was severe, and indicated the divine displeasure toward the man on whom it was inflicted, and by implication toward all others who oppose the truth.

Did the fact that certain prophets and teachers at Antioch laid hands on Saul and Barnabas enable Saul to work miracles? We are not informed, and should not try to be wise above what is written. Ananias laid hands on him that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 9:17.) And the Holy Spirit was the power which enabled Paul to work miracles. Therefore, as we are not informed why Saul did not work miracles till after his name was changed, nor why his name was changed, we should remember Deuteronomy 29:29, and be satisfied. These are undetermined questions; that is, the answers to them are not given, and we should not try to answer them.

What may we say of Paul's discourse in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia of Asia Minor? It was chiefly historic, and was in style like unto Stephen's discourse, recorded in the 7th chapter of this book.

What is explained in the 36th and 37th verses of this chapter? The prophecy that God would not suffer his Holy One to see corruption is here explained to mean the de-

caying of the body. Christ's body was not suffered to decay.

Does the 39th verse of this chapter teach the doctrine of justification by “faith only,” or by “faith alone”? It does not. Faith or belief is necessary in order to produce repentance, and it must be followed by other acts of obedience. Chapter 18:8 indicates how the Corinthians became Christians, and to that process all others must conform if they would become Christians. But the omission of repentance, from the record in chapter 18:8, does not mean that the Corinthians did not repent. Such a conclusion would be as erroneous as to say that because faith is not mentioned in the record of the conversions recorded in the 2nd chapter of this book, therefore, faith was absent from those conversions. The Holy Spirit only mentioned explicitly that which was necessary in regard to each case of conversion, and in each declaration of doctrine. All else that was required was implied, and we need to take the whole record in order to learn the whole truth.

What is indicated in the disposition of the Jews, as mentioned in the 45th verse? The indication is that they were filled with that contemptible something called “sectism.” Instead of rejoicing that the Gentiles were disposed to hear the word of God “they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things that were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.” Sectarianism was the same then that it is now. It is evil in its origin, and in all of its outworkings.

What is set forth in the 46th verse? That the Jews had the first right to hear the Gospel is set forth in explicit terms, also the fact that by putting it from them they judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life. And what does this fact imply concerning God's dealings with mankind? It implies that all who put the word of God from them do actually judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life. In view of this, what should we say of those who censure the Lord for “sending people to hell,” as they charge against him? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.” The divine Father, in his benevolence and justice, gives mankind an opportunity to know his will. The heathen have an opportunity to know it, in some measure, through nature. See Romans 1:19, 20; 2:14. The Jews had an opportunity to know it, as set forth in their law, and then as set forth in the Gospel. The same is now true of all who have access to the Bible. And, just in proportion as mankind have put the divine will from them they have judged

themselves “unworthy of everlasting life.” When they have thus judged themselves certainly it will be just, and even necessary, for them to be thus judged in the last day. They formulate the sentence by putting the divine will from them, and deciding that they do not wish to serve God, and, then, in the last day, that sentence will be pronounced against them.

What may we say of the last part of the 48th verse—does it teach individual election to eternal life? No. The translation in the Common Version so indicates, but it is not the only translation which the Greek text admits. Instead of “ordained to” we may read “disposed for,” or “determined for.” Those Gentiles had been under Jewish teaching in some measure, and had heard of the doctrine of eternal life, for that doctrine was generally taught by them. Daniel 12: declares it, and Matthew 19:16 indicates that it was taught by the Jews. When those Gentiles, who had heard of that doctrine, learned that it was offered through Christ they believed in him. The word here translated “ordained” means, “to set, appoint in a certain station; to set, devote to a certain purpose; to dispose, frame for an object; to arrange, or appoint in place or time; to allot, assign, to settle, decide.” In view of such shades of meaning we are not confined to the reading of this verse which is found in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, especially when that reading is contrary to other teaching in the New Testament. See Acts 17:30, which declares that God “commands all men everywhere to repent.” Moreover, the reader can see that, as the Gospel sets forth the doctrine of “eternal life” we need not suppose that the Gentiles here spoken of had any previous acquaintance with that doctrine. But as soon as they heard that “eternal life” was offered through belief in Christ, then, “as many as were disposed for eternal life believed.” This is the right translation because it is in harmony with all else in the New Testament.

CHAPTER XIV

What is recorded in the chapter now before us? A record is here given of the labors and persecutions of Paul and Barnabas at a place named Iconium, also of the fact that they fled to certain cities named Lystra and Derbe, and there preached the Gospel. A record is then given of a miracle which the Lord wrought through Paul at Lystra, and of the effect it had on the people of that place, also of a speech which Paul

and Barnabas made to them. Next we read of the fact that Paul was stoned until he was supposed to have been dead. The record then makes mention of Paul and Barnabas in Derbe, and of preaching there, then in other cities, after which we learn that they confirmed the disciples, ordained elders in every church, and returned to Antioch, from which they had been recommended for their work. The chapter is ended with a statement of what they did when they had returned to Antioch, and of the fact that they remained there a long time with the disciples.

What is indicated in the first verse of this chapter? The indication is that faith, or belief, was produced in many persons in the city of Iconium. by that which Paul and Barnabas spoke to them. This illustrates Romans 10:17.

And what do we learn by the 2nd verse and onward to the 5th? The disposition of the unbelieving Jews was always the same. It was intense sectarianism, and was the same that is now found in sectarian religionists wherever they exist.

What may we say of the disposition of the people of Lystra? It was unsteady. By reason of a miracle they regarded Paul and Barnabas as gods worthy of worship and then by reason of the talk of certain Jews they were led to regard Paul as a man who deserved to be stoned to death and dragged out of their city.

Should confirmation as a special ordinance, or ceremony, be founded on the 22nd verse of this chapter? No. That verse informs us concerning an effect produced by assuring words and facts, and not in regard to any special ordinance.

Does the 23rd verse of this chapter teach that the Apostles prayed with fasting as a part of the services in ordaining elders? It does not. The word "them" in the first and last of this verse refers to the brethren, generally, and not to the elders as such. This being true the fact that Paul and Barnabas "prayed with fasting" seems incidental rather than a part of the ordination. Moreover, this verse indicates that Paul and Barnabas were the only ones who "prayed with fasting," just as in chapter 13:1-3 we learn that the "prophets and teachers" who were at Antioch were the only ones who "fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on" Paul and Barnabas. On the same principle we learn that "the Apostles" were the only ones who "prayed" and "laid their hands on" the seven who were "chosen to serve tables" at Jerusalem. The words of the text do not indicate that the

congregation was involved in the praying, the fasting, nor the laying on of hands, in any one of these instances. But in chapter 6:6 “the Apostles” “prayed” and “laid their hands on”; in chapter 13:3 “certain prophets and teachers” fasted and prayed and “laid their hands on”; and here in chapter 14:23 “Paul and Barnabas” “prayed with fasting. “ This being true, the fasting, praying, and laying on of hands, were all confined to inspired men, who were themselves specially ordained by the Holy Spirit to their special work, and did not involve the congregation in any instance, except in its effects. In view of all this, why should any one contend that a congregation of uninspired persons should now fast and pray and lay on hands in appointing overseers or deacons? The answer to this question is, to say the least, that whoever thus contends is not a careful reader of the Sacred Text on this subject, or does not feel the importance of speaking as the Scripture speaks, and being silent where it is silent.

What may we learn by considering the 26th verse in connection with the first part of the 13th chapter? We may learn that the separation of Paul and Barnabas for the work to which they had been called was also a recommending of them to the grace, or favor, of God. They had been specially called by the Holy Spirit to that work, and by certain inspired men were specially set apart to it, and recommended to the grace of God for it. Is there anything in all this for those to imitate who are not specially called by the Holy Spirit to do a special work? There is not. All that was done in fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands, while the Apostles were personally on earth, pertained to them and those who, as inspired men, were associated with them. To us, who live in the period of completed revelation, all Apostolic sanction and Apostolic gifts, are, in their results, offered to us in the written documents which together make up the book titled, The New Testament. We may individually fast and pray, as much as we decide we should, but we have not the right to impose fasting and prayer on the Church for the purpose of ordaining elders, nor for any other purpose. The qualifications of bishops and deacons, as set forth by Paul, do not involve special gifts, nor does the choosing of them involve special ceremonies. When an evangelist appoints men for these positions, in establishing a church, or a church afterwards chooses such men, then, if the men who are chosen have the qualifications, the Holy Spirit sanctions what is done without special ceremony.

But what should be our answer to those who contend for the

laying on of hands in appointing men to official position in the Church, and refer to the fact that the elders laid hands on Timothy? Our answer should be that not only the elders, but Paul also, laid hands on Timothy. See 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6. The implication is that the elders were associated with Paul even as “the elders and brethren” at Jerusalem were associated with “the Apostles” there in a letter of “decrees” to the Gentile churches in regard to circumcision, and other Jewish practices. See Acts 15th chapter. But this does not prove that “the elders and brethren” at any place should now issue “decrees” in letters to the churches at any other place, nor make “decrees” for themselves.

CHAPTER XV

Of what do we read in this chapter? We read of the first doctrinal difference that occurred in the New Testament Church, and of the manner and means of settling it, also of the first contention between two preachers of the Gospel, and how it was settled. The chapter is ended with mention of the fact that Paul chose a new traveling companion, and then went forth to labor in the Gospel among the churches, also that Barnabas did likewise.

What may we learn by considering the origin of the first doctrinal difference which arose in the primitive Church? We may learn that it originated by a misapplication of a divine doctrine, or, more strictly, by an unauthorized extension of that doctrine. Fleshly circumcision was intended for the Jews, and for men of certain other nations who desired to be numbered with the Jewish people. But it was not intended for Gentiles, as such, and, especially, not for Gentiles, who had become, or desired to become, Christians. It was a fleshly mark for fleshly Israel, and though it had a spiritual significance, as a type, (Deuteronomy 10:16; Colossians 2:11), yet, in itself, it did not require any spiritual, nor even moral, qualification. Therefore, to impose it, as an essential to salvation, on the Christians who were Gentiles, by nature, was an unauthorized extension of circumcision. This introduced a doctrinal difference, which became serious because those who introduced it were urgent and unreasonable in its advocacy.

What divine truth, afterwards written as a part of the Sacred Text, was directly violated when Jewish circumcision was urged on Gentile Christians as a condition of salvation? Romans 10:4 was violated. Is the misapplication, or unau-

thorized extension, of divine doctrine still a cause of difference among professed followers of Christ? It is a cause of nearly all differences which exist in the domain that is generally designated "Christendom." The Jewish priesthood with its robes, the Jewish tabernacle with much of its service, the Jewish infant membership, the Jewish tithing and winedrinking, the Jewish musical instruments with select singers, and even the material splendor of the Jewish tabernacle and temple, also the Jewish college—these and certain other Jewish doctrines and practices, as divinely intended for the Jews only, have been, in a modified form, extended to the doctrines and practices of many professed Christians. But all this has been done in opposition to Romans 10:4, and many other scriptures.

What is the disposition of those who go after Jewish doctrines and practices and try to impose them on Gentile Christians? That depends on the foundation of their purpose in going after those phases of Judaism. If the foundation of their purpose is a conviction, produced by a wrong application of testimony, resulting from a failure to understand the right divisions of the Bible, they may be reasoned with, and convinced of their error. But if the foundation of their purpose, in going after Judaism, is a desire to be popular, by making an outward show, then they are unreasonable, and contemptible in their disposition. What was the disposition of the Judaizing teachers mentioned in the chapter we are now considering? Paul informs us concerning them in Galatians 6:12, 13. Those Judaizers might have professed great love for the law, and respect for the fathers, and might have rolled their eyes heavenward while professing their love for the truth of God, and for all truth, as religious hypocrites generally do. But Paul, as an inspired man, tore their robes of hypocrisy from them, and exposed them in the nakedness of their evil pretensions when he wrote thus: "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh." In other words, the Judaizing teachers who disturbed the Gentile Christians with fleshly circumcision were worshipers of the God of popularity, rather than of the God of heaven. Besides, they wished to escape persecution, and desired to glory in the flesh of the Christians among the Gentiles. This means that they desired to have between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians a fleshly bond of union and communion, and an

enlargement of the brotherhood by reason of that bond. It was the union of Christians upon a fleshly basis, or church federation on a humanly arranged foundation. That same disposition is manifest in all the churches of "Christendom," which go after one or more Jewish practices in order to make a show, to be popular, to escape persecution, and to glory in something that they have arranged. But there are persons, in all those churches, perhaps, who do not partake of the mentioned disposition, and such may be reasoned with, convinced by the truth, and led into the New Testament Church.

What was the method by which the Apostles and elders and brethren at Jerusalem endeavored to settle the mentioned difference, or difficulty, among the Gentile Christians? They wrote a letter to them in which they made mention of the Judaizers as men who had "troubled" the Gentile brethren, and who were guilty of "subverting" their "souls," by saying that they should be "circumcised and keep the law," and then added, "to whom we gave no such commandment."

What effect did the mentioned letter have on the Gentile brethren? It caused them to "rejoice for the consolation." See verse 31. Did it convert any one of their Judaizers? We are not informed, but Paul's description of them in Galatians 6:12, 13 indicates that not one of them was converted to the "decrees" set forth in the mentioned letter. Men of such disposition are not liable to conversion from any error which they have accepted, nor to any truth which they have rejected. They have religious motives and ambitions that are earthward, and they are generally possessed of large conceit. Men may possess, or hold, considerable conceit, and yet be convinced of an error, but when their conceit is so large that it possesses, or holds, them, then they are beyond the bounds of reason, and even divine revelation seldom affects them. If they accept the truth of God, on any subject, they will endeavor to find some way by which to exalt themselves in its acceptance, or in its advocacy. They are, generally, technical in a high degree, and exemplify Proverbs 26:12. Of this class are many of the technical specimens who now disturb the churches of Christ.

To whom should appeal now be made for the settlement of all doctrinal differences which may exist among the churches of Christ? To the Apostles and inspired evangelists whose writings make up the New Testament should be our constant appeal. Their writings set forth the latest divine decisions concerning the divine will. What estimate should we place on church history which has been written by uninspired men concerning the periods which have passed since the inspired

record was ended? We should estimate it as a record of facts and fiction, truth and falsehood, so intermingled that only those can safely use it who are well acquainted with the inspired record. The first, and last, and constant, appeal of all who desire to be right in regard to religion must be made to the Sacred Text.

What may we learn by the 9th verse of this chapter? The power by which God purifies the hearts of mankind is here mentioned as “faith,” or more strictly “the faith,” or the Gospel. By our faith or confidence in the faith, or the Gospel, our hearts are purified. What about those who say that God must send the Holy Spirit into the sinner's heart in order to purify it? They ignore the verse we are now considering.

Did the Apostle Peter refer simply to circumcision, or to the entire Jewish law, when he said what is set forth in the 10th verse? Galatians 5:1-4 indicates that he referred to the entire law. To accept one item of it as binding meant to accept the authority by which that one item was given, and that was the authority that gave all other items of the entire law. But why did Peter speak of the law that was given to the Jews as a yoke which could not be borne? We are not definitely informed. But when we look for a perfect exemplar of the law we fail to find it till we come to the Savior. This implies that the Jewish law was so strict, and had so many details, that it required more than the mind of man could keep constantly before it so as to render perfect obedience at all times.

What is indicated in the 16th verse? The “tabernacle of David” referred to the family, or house, of David which had ceased to be the ruling house, though the tribe of Judah, from which David, sprang, was still the chief tribe among the Jews. With this much before our minds we can understand that when Christ was raised from the dead, and especially when he ascended to heaven, and became the head of the Church, then the house of David was built again, or the family of David was raised up.

What should we say of those who use this verse as evidence in favor of the idea that the Church of Christ existed in the Old Testament period, and that it had fallen down, but that Christ rebuilt it? Such an idea is contrary to Matthew 16:18, and those who advocate it are perverters of the word of God.

Are the recommendations set forth in the 20th and 29th verses

a part of the Jewish law? They are, but they were, near or about all given to God's people before the law was given, and, therefore, could be recommended without acknowledging that the law was still authorized. For instance, see what is said in Genesis 9:4, about eating blood. That was said to Noah, and was intended to be observed by all mankind in all ages.

What may we learn by considering the 21st verse of this chapter? We may learn that though Moses had been personally dead fifteen hundred years, or more, yet he was, officially, alive wherever his writings were read. On the same principle we may conclude that though the Apostles, and inspired evangelists, have been, personally, dead for over eighteen hundred years, yet they are, officially, alive in their writings, and will be till the end of the Gospel Age, and, perhaps, longer.

What is set forth for our learning in the record given in the last of this chapter concerning the dispute between Paul and Barnabas in regard to John Mark? We may first learn that inspired men were not always guided by inspiration in the details of life, but were left to their own judgment, and that then they were liable to differ from each other. We may next learn that the separation between Paul and Barnabas was only personal, and that it was turned to good account by each of them choosing another traveling companion, and, thus, there were two companies of preachers, going into

different communities, instead of only one company. Finally, we may learn how preachers, and other Christians, may proceed when they differ seriously about matters of opinion or preference. They may separate, but in

so doing they should not try to destroy each other's usefulness by slanderous talking. As far as the divine record informs us neither Paul nor Barnabas ever again mentioned their dispute, and, at a later date ' Paul seemed to think more favorably of John Mark than he did at the time mentioned in this chapter. See 2 Timothy 4:11. Perhaps Mark needed the rebuke that Paul's rejection of him, as a traveling companion, inflicted on him, and afterwards pursued a course which elevated him in Paul's estimation. But this is only a conjecture, and should not be considered except incidentally. The facts with reference to which Bible readers should be concerned have been mentioned, and with these we should be satisfied.

Yet there is one other thought that ought to be mentioned in regard to the record of the dispute between Paul and Bar-

nabas. This thought is that the divine record is impartial. It informs us of the murmurings that arose in the church at Jerusalem as recorded in the 6th chapter of the book we are considering, also of the doctrinal dispute that certain Judaizing teachers introduced among the Gentile churches, and, finally, it informs us of the personal dispute which arose between the Apostle Paul and a preacher named Barnabas. These items of information show the impartiality of the divine record, and indicate that it is correct, because it sets forth what was unfavorable as well as that which was favorable in the New Testament Church. The Bible was not written on the principle which, generally, pervades a funeral sermon,—praising the good and suppressing the evil. But it sets forth both the good and the evil, even among the best of God's people. In this we find a strong reason for believing the Bible to be strictly true.

CHAPTER XVI

What axe Bible readers permitted to learn in this chapter? A record of some of the travels, and labors in the Gospel, and persecutions, of Paul, and of Silas, his traveling companion, is here set forth for our learning. The first of this record introduces to our notice a certain disciple, named Timothy, then we are informed of the conversion of a woman named Lydia, with her household, also of what Paul said to a young woman who was possessed of an evil spirit, and of the results, of what he said to her. In the latter part of this chapter is a record of the conversion of the jailer at Philippi, with his household, and of Paul's interview with the sergeants of that part of the Roman army which was stationed at Philippi, also a record of that which Paul and Silas did after the mentioned interview was ended.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd verse of this chapter? We may learn that God's covenant with Abraham in regard to circumcision was in force even after the Jewish law had been fulfilled and abolished. See Genesis 17:1-14. In other words, that “covenant” was divinely intended to be “everlasting” for the descendants of Abraham. But while considering this institution we should bear in mind that it was founded on earthward relationship, and not on spiritual qualifications. It was intended to be “everlasting” from a national, and not from a religious, viewpoint. Therefore Timothy could not be a member of the Jewish commonwealth without circumcision, yet he could be an obedient disciple of the Lord Jesus, and thus could be a Christian

without it. Nevertheless, he had a right to it because his mother was a Jewess, and, thus, the blood of Abraham was, in some degree, in his veins.

In view of all this, what should be our response to those who speak as if fleshly circumcision has been abolished, and, especially, those who say that infant baptism has come in the room of Jewish circumcision? We should say to them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. “Fleshly circumcision did not begin with the Jewish law, nor has it ended with that law. But it is still in existence, and for the very purpose for which it was first required. In its earthward purpose it was intended as a cutting off, or separation, of Abraham and his descendants, with their households, from all other nations. This is indicated in Genesis 17:14. Then its spiritual purpose in regard to the Jew was that he should keep himself personally in obedience to God, and thus separated from the evils of all other nations. This is indicated in Deuteronomy 10:16; Jeremiah 4:4, and other scriptures. Finally, its spiritual bearing upon both Jews and Gentiles in regard to the Gospel Age is declared in Romans 4:11, 12. To Abraham it was a “sign” and “seal” of “the righteousness of the faith” which he had before he was circumcised ’ and by reason of that faith he became the father of two peoples who believe, namely, the uncircumcised and the circumcised—the believing Gentiles and the believing Jews.

What should be our response to those who use the 3rd verse of this chapter as an argument in favor of policy in religious affairs? We should admit that Paul did circumcise Timothy in order to make him more acceptable to the Jews than he would otherwise have been, but he did so only because it was right. Timothy had a divinely given right to circumcision, because of his Jewish parentage, and, therefore, he could be righteously circumcised. But this fact does not justify any one in adopting a policy that is not right, because it has not a divinely authorized basis. Paul circumcised Timothy as a matter of policy; therefore Christians may use musical instruments in Worship as a matter of policy —this kind of reasoning is unscriptural and foolish. It omits mention of the fact that Timothy had a divinely given right to circumcision, by reason of his Jewish parentage, and assumes the falsehood that Christians have a divinely given right to the use of musical instruments in their worship.

What were the “decrees” that are mentioned in the 4th verse? They were the decisions of the Apostles and elders and

brethren at Jerusalem, as set forth in the letter of which mention is made in the preceding chapter.

What is indicated in the 7th verse? The indication is that the judgment of Paul and Silas when not under direct influence of the Holy Spirit was liable to be wrong. This also indicates Paul's confession of ignorance, as recorded in chapter 23:5, and Peter's mistake as recorded in Galatians 2:11-14. But should the fact that the Apostles were not always under the direct dictatorship of the Holy Spirit, prevent us from having entire confidence in all that they professed to give by the Spirit's directions? It should not, but should have the opposite effect on us. For instance, in the 7th chapter of 1 Corinthians we learn that Paul's inspiration was so clear and so definite that he knew the very word with which it began, and the very word with which it ended. This is most evident in the 10th and 12th verses of that chapter.

What should be our response to those who use the 13th verse of this chapter as an argument in favor of Christians keeping the seventh day of the week as the day of worship? We should say to them that Paul and Silas, as Jews, had a right to keep the 7th day of the week, even as Timothy had a right to circumcision, because he had Jewish blood in his veins. The Jews were commanded to keep the sabbath day because they were, as a nation, in Egypt, and God delivered them by his power. See Deuteronomy 5:15. But that which was true of the Jews, in that respect, is not true of any other people. All Jews who are Christians can scripturally keep the sabbath, even as they can scripturally observe circumcision. But that cannot be said of Gentile Christians. At the same time, we may say that Paul and Silas did what is mentioned in the 13th verse of this chapter as any preacher of Christ would now go into a sabbatarian meeting house on the seventh day of the week, namely, because an assembly can be found there on that day. This is all that is indicated in the verse, under consideration, as far as example is concerned.

What should we say to those who use the 14th verse of this chapter to prove that the Lord operates on the hearts of alien sinners, directly, in order to convert them, or to prepare them for conversion by the Gospel? We should say to them that they certainly misuse that verse. Lydia was not an alien sinner as the Gentiles were, but was a worshiper of God according to the light she had, even as Cornelius was. Therefore, if we could find in this verse the declaration that God opened her heart by a direct operation of his Spirit, yet

that would not authorize us to say that he does the same, or may do the same, for Gentile sinners who are not worshipers of God. The Lord sent an angel to tell Cornelius where to send for a preacher to tell him words whereby he could be saved. But that does not justify us in saying that God may, or should, send an angel to tell all other persons where to send for a preacher to tell them what to do in order to be saved. But this verse does not state explicitly that God operated directly on the heart of Lydia, nor does it so state by implication. God brought the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, but he did not do so by a direct operation either on the Israelites or on the Egyptians. On the same principle it may be safely stated that though the Lord "opened" the heart of Lydia, yet he may have done so without any direct operation. And now we are prepared to consider that the last part of the preceding verse informs us that Paul and Silas "spake unto the women." This settles the question. On the day of Pentecost, mentioned in the 2nd chapter of this book, the Lord "pricked" a great company "in their heart," so that they wished to know what they should do, and he did this by the preaching of the gospel of Christ which the Apostle Peter did on that occasion. On the same principle the Lord opened the heart of Lydia by that which Paul, as an apostle, said to her.

What should be our answer to those who declare that there were infants in Lydia's household, or who, at least, try to use the 15th verse of this chapter in favor of infant baptism? We should try to inform them that such use of this verse supposes that Lydia was married, or that some other woman with her was married, and had one or more children, also that at least one of her children was an infant, and that she had her infant child with her. Here are four suppositions, each of which is without the slightest foundation in the Sacred Text, and cannot be pleaded for as scriptural, nor even as reasonable. Therefore, we may safely reject the idea that an infant was in Lydia's household.

What may we learn by considering the 16th, 17th and 18th verses of this chapter? We may learn that at the time Paul and Silas were at Philippi the evil spirits had not been cast out of all who had been possessed by them. We may also learn that if the modern fortune-tellers are more than shrewd guessers they are in league with the devil, even as the young woman was of whom we read in the scriptures now under consideration.

What else may we learn by considering these scriptures? We

may learn that the evil spirit who possessed the young woman here mentioned knew more about God and Christ than her masters, and all other unbelievers, did, for she knew that Paul and Silas were “servants of the most high God,” and preachers of “the way of salvation.” This suggests Mark 1:23, 24, in which scripture we are informed that a certain demon knew more than mankind did at that time.

What disposition was shown by the masters of the young woman, who was possessed of an evil spirit, when they saw that the hope of their gains, by her sooth-saying, was gone? They showed the same disposition that a certain man did at another place. See chapter 19:24-27. Is that disposition now manifest among mankind? Yes. It is in every sectarian mind and heart. Sectarrians love their party, their creed, their name, their meeting house, their glory, more than they love the souls of their fellow mortals who are not numbered with them, and more than they love the Lord, if we may judge them by their conduct. Therefore, everything which encroaches on their domain stirs their wrath, and draws out their spirit of persecution. Like the masters of the young woman mentioned in this chapter, they will even make false charges in order to accomplish their persecuting ends.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the jailer's conversion? We may learn, first of all, that the Lord knew how to manage affairs at Philippi, even as he knows how to manage all other affairs. Though he suffered Paul and Silas to be beaten and cast into prison, yet he overruled it all for good, and accomplished the conversion of the jailer and his' household. This was the beginning of the church at Philippi which was afterwards very dear to the Apostle Paul.

But this is not all. We may next learn that belief in Christ is the first essential to salvation, and then that those who would be saved need to become acquainted with “the word of the Lord,” in its requirements of them. Paul commanded the jailer to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,” but he did not stop with giving that command. Neither did he sing, “Only believe and you shall be saved, and heaven is yours forever,” as many modern religionists do. But he “spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.” The doctrine that he set forth in his speaking on that occasion is evident from that which followed, namely, he “was baptized, he and all his, straightway.”

Have we any evidence that there was sufficient water near the jail in Philippi to immerse persons? Yes. The 12th and

13th verses of this chapter inform us that the city of Philippi in Macedonia was situated near a “river.”

What should we say to those who contend that the baptism of the jailer and his household was performed in the jail, and that, therefore, immersion was impossible? We should say that the 30th verse informs us that the jailer “brought” Paul and Silas “out” of the prison, and that after he had done so they spoke to him and his household “the word of the Lord.” This implies that he took them out of prison and took them into his house. Then after the baptism he “brought them into his house,” which implies that between the speaking of “the word of the Lord” to him and his household and the time mentioned in the 34th verse he had been with them somewhere out of his house. Moreover, in course of the time that they were out of his house, and out of the prison, he was “baptized.” This settles the question for all who wish to know the truth.

But what shall we say to those who contend that the 30th verse means only that the jailer brought Paul and Silas out of “the inner prison”? We should say to them that the word “prison,” as found in the 26th and 27th verses, forbids such a contention.

And what should we say to those who contend that the jailer did not dare to leave that prison at night, nor to take any of the prisoners out of it? We should tell them that the record informs us that he took two of the prisoners out of the prison, and that when a man is filled with the fear of God then the fear of man is dismissed.

Were any infants in the jailer's household? The 34th verse informs us that he and all his household “rejoiced, believing in God,” and this excludes those who were not old enough to believe.

What disposition did Paul manifest when he expressed himself as is recorded in the 37th verse? He showed that he relied on his citizenship in a heathen nation for personal protection. And how was he a Roman citizen? He was born of Jewish parents, but was born in a Roman city which made him a citizen of the Roman Empire. See Acts 22:25-28.

And what may we say of the disposition of the Philippians as expressed in the 39th verse? They showed a common weakness. They did not know their best friends, and desired Paul and Silas to depart. This has been common among mankind in all ages. By reason of ignorance, inattention,

prejudice, passion, or some other weakness, the masses of mankind don't know their best friends, and are, generally, disposed to dismiss them in order to cling to their worst enemies. What is the explanation of this disposition? Proverbs 15:10 is an index to the explanation in many instances.

CHAPTER XVII

What are the outlines of this chapter? They consist of mention of the passage of Paul and Silas to a place named Thessalonica, and of what Paul did there, also of the effect of his preaching there, and of the persecutions inflicted on him and Silas before they left that place. Next we read of the persecution of one or more, who had received them at Thessalonica, of the departure of Paul and Silas to a place named Berea, of the disposition of the Bereans, and then of that which certain Jews at Thessalonica did. Next we read of the departure of Paul to the city of Athens, also of the fact that he sent for Silas and Timotheus to come to him. Then we read of what Paul did at Athens, how he was received, of his preaching, and what the results of his preaching were.

Why did Paul go into the synagogue of the Jews on the sabbath day at Thessalonica? Because that was the day that the Jews who had not become Christians met in their synagogues, and Paul met with them because he wished to talk to them concerning Christ, as is implied by results. What should we say to those who tell us that the fact that Paul went into the Jewish synagogue on the sabbath is evidence that Gentile Christians should keep the sabbath? We should say to them that they might as well tell us that the fact that Paul circumcised Timothy is evidence that Gentile Christians should be circumcised. Would it be right for Jewish Christians to keep the sabbath? Yes, as a celebration of a national event. See Deuteronomy 5:15. On the same principle it would be right for Jewish Christians to circumcise their male children. But if Gentile Christians would adopt Jewish circumcision they would fall from grace. See Galatians 5:1-4. This indicates what would be the result if Gentile Christians would adopt the Jewish sabbath.

What may be justly affirmed of the disposition of the Jews to Thessalonica? Those of them who rejected Paul's teaching concerning Christ showed that they were genuine sectarians. Do sectarians still manifest the same spirit? They do. The spirit of sectarianism is always the spirit of ignorance, and in its worst forms, or degrees, it is the spirit of persecution. Thus it has been; thus it is; and thus it will be.

But what may be affirmed of the disposition shown by the Jews at Berea? They were not sectarians, therefore their minds were open to receive the truth, and they were ready to investigate in order to assure themselves that the doctrine they had received was true. This disposition is found in a few, even among sectarian churches in this generation. They show a willingness to learn the truth, and thereby show that they are better than the churches with which they are connected. In view of this we should not make an unmodified denunciation of all who are connected with sectarian churches. In all religious bodies, except the Church of Christ, there are individuals who are better than their creeds. Christians cannot be better than their creed—the Bible. They cannot be, in all respects, as good as their creed requires them to be.

What would now be said of a man who would show the disposition which Paul did, as is recorded in the 17th verse of this chapter? He would likely be called “a religious crank.” And what did certain Athenians say of Paul? They spoke of him as a “babbler.” But did they not treat him fairly? They did, in that they took him to their highest court, and asked him to tell them the meaning of the doctrine he preached. This was fair and honorable. Such treatment of Paul showed that those who manifested it were not the worst of sectarians. They were, at least, willing to hear what a stranger was disposed to offer for their instruction.

What may we say of the 21st verse? It indicates that the Athenians were more anxious for knowledge than for wealth. They spent their time either in imparting or receiving information, rather than in reaching for wealth. The greed for gain had not taken possession of them.

What may we say of Paul's speech on Mars Hill? He opposed the idolatry of the Athenians from the standpoint of their own admissions of their origin. He quoted from one of their own poets the declaration that they were “the offspring of gods,” and from that viewpoint condemned their idols. What may we learn by considering Paul's method of discourse? We may learn how we should treat all persons who do not believe the doctrine we preach. According to Paul's method of discourse we should find some truth which those whom we address believe, and from the viewpoint of that truth we should reason with them concerning their errors.

What is implied in the declaration about God winking at ignorance, as mentioned in the first part of the 30th verse of this chapter? In the 16th verse of the 14th chapter of

this book we find an explanation of the expression “winked at.” God “suffered all nations to walk in their own ways” throughout the period that he did. not offer his revelation to them. Should we at any time say that God “permits” mankind to do wrong? No. The word “permits” implies right, and by implication this implies authority. We would better confine ourselves to the exact language of the Sacred Text, and say God has “suffered” mankind to do wrong. They are naturally inclined to “walk in their own ways, and he has “suffered” them to do so, at their peril.

What may we say of those who “mocked” when they “heard of the resurrection of the dead”? They showed that they were sectarians—unwilling to learn more than they already knew on that subject. This is a mark of sectarianism. All sectarians have limited themselves in regard to information. But some of them are like the Jews at Thessalonica who rejected Paul's teaching,—they wish to limit others. As a result they persecute those who preach such truth as they do not believe, and will even persecute those who accept such truth. There are many grades or degrees of sectarianism. All grades of it cause those afflicted with it to limit themselves in regard to truth. But in some the grade is so mild that those possessing it are not disposed to persecute others, while in other instances the grade, or degree, of it is so intense that persecution is the result.

What should we say of those who said, “We will hear thee again of this matter”? They showed that though they were heathen, yet they were not sectarians, but were willing to receive truth even if it came from a stranger.

CHAPTER XVIII

Of what are we informed in the 18th chapter of this book? We are informed that Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, and that he worked for a time there at tent-making, also that he reasoned in the synagogues “every sabbath” concerning Jesus the Christ, and that many obeyed the Gospel. We are informed also of opposition to the preaching which he did, of the encouragement that the Lord gave to him in a vision, and of the length of time that he remained there. Next we are informed of persecution of Paul and others by unbelieving Jews, and of the fact that the civil authorities seemed indifferent in regard to the questions raised by those Jews, and suffered them to have their own way. But we learn that Paul “tarried there yet a good while” and then departed, and turned toward Jerusalem, where he desired

to keep a feast of the Jews. The chapter is ended with an account of a Jew named Apollos who preached, but knew only the baptism of John, and who was instructed more fully by certain disciples, and was then commended to the disciples elsewhere.

What may we learn by considering the fact that Paul worked at tent-making with a certain man and his wife? In chapter 20:34, 35, we learn that Paul labored with his own hands for example's sake. What should we say to those who will urge that example as a justification of preachers establishing colleges to furnish secular employment for themselves in school teaching, during nine months of every year? We should inform them that Paul's incidental working at a secular calling was intended as an example of industry, and against idleness among church members, generally, and not as a reason for preachers to build secular institutions to furnish themselves secular employment three-fourths of their time. Paul often went into Jewish synagogues to preach Christ unto the Jews, but that should not be urged as a reason why Christians should build Jewish synagogues. The truth is, Paul's working at physical labor, and going into Jewish synagogues, were both incidentals in his life, even as was his advice to Timothy in regard to taking wine for his health. The same reasoning that will found a religio-secular college on Paul's incidental laboring with his hands, will build a Jewish synagogue on the custom of Paul in entering those synagogues, and would even found a medical college, and plant a vineyard, on the fact that Paul incidentally told Timothy to use a little wine for his "stomach's sake" and his "often infirmities,."

What may we learn by considering the 8th verse of this chapter? We may learn how the church of God at Corinth was established. Those who became members of that church did so by hearing, believing, and being baptized. They did not have any mourners' bench, nor any anxious seat, nor any confessional box, nor any experience meeting. But "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." Thus it was when the Gospel was first preached at Corinth in Greece, in the first century of the Gospel Age, and thus it should be in the present century of the Gospel Age. As it was in the beginning, so it is now wherever the Gospel is faithfully made known, and so it should be till the end of time.

And what may we learn by considering the 11th verse of this chapter? We may learn that a preacher of Christ may

remain a year and a half in the same city, and yet be within the limits of Apostolic example. The chief question concerning a preacher should not be concerning the length of time he may remain at any place, but how he spends his time while remaining there.

What may we say of the fact that Paul made a vow, shaved his head, and determined to keep a certain Jewish feast at Jerusalem? We may learn that he exercised his privilege as a Jew, even after he became a Christian. We learned in the 16th chapter of this book that he stood on his rights as a Roman citizen even after he became a Christian, and we here learn that he exercised his privilege as a member of the Jewish nation even after he became a Christian. Vows were voluntary throughout the Jewish Age. See Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5. Besides, they are voluntary in the Gospel Age. The community of goods in the church at Jerusalem was a voluntary matter, even as vows in the Jewish Age were voluntary. A Christian may make a vow of celibacy for the Gospel's sake, or he may vow to give to the Lord his entire life as an evangelist. Martin Luther vowed to become a monk while he was in the midst of a thunderstorm, and Alexander Campbell vowed to become a preacher while in the midst of a shipwreck. But all such vowing is voluntary, even as vows under the Jewish law were voluntary. See Leviticus 27th chapter, also Numbers 6th chapter. As for the feast of the Jews which Paul proposed to keep at Jerusalem, it was his privilege to observe such a feast because he was a Jew.

What may we say of Apollos, of whom we read in the last of this chapter? He was a model man, for he was willing to learn, from a woman as well as from a man. Think of a preacher who is “an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, “ yet is willing to learn from a man and his wife who were only private workers for the Lord! Such a man shows that he is not conceited, but has reverence for God and his Word, and has supreme love for the truth. In other words, he is not a sectarian; but is a disciple of the Christ in that he is willing to learn all that Christ has revealed of himself to mankind.

What is indicated in the 27th verse? A letter of commendation is indicated.

CHAPTER XIX

What is recorded for the learning of Bible readers in this chapter? A record is first offered to us of the re-baptism of

twelve men at Ephesus who had been previously baptized unto John's baptism. Then a record is given of the fact that Paul spoke the Word at Ephesus for three months, also that some were hardened, that he then went into the school of a man named Tyrannus, and disputed for two years, and that special miracles were wrought by Paul. We next find a record of certain "vagabond Jews" who attempted to cast out evil spirits by the name of Jesus, and of the results of their attempt in that direction. Then our attention is invited to a brief record of the results of the Gospel and its outworkings at Ephesus. This is followed by a statement concerning Paul's purpose to go to Jerusalem, and his prospect in regard to seeing Rome also. The remainder of the chapter sets forth a record of opposition to the Gospel, and its results at Ephesus.

What may we learn by considering the first part of this chapter? We may learn that the Lord has been very merciful to us in regard to the subject of baptism. He foresaw that in the course of time many would be baptized without believing in Christ with the purpose to obey him, and in giving us the record found in the first part of this chapter he has graciously informed us that all such should be baptized again. What should we say to those who declare that any immersion which is not for the right purpose is not baptism, and that they do not believe in re-baptism? We should say to them that they should not differ from the Apostle Paul, According to the record here given Paul regarded an improper immersion as a baptism, though not a valid, or acceptable, baptism. For he acknowledged that those twelve disciples whom he found at Ephesus had been "baptized," though not acceptably baptized. Therefore, we should all believe in the re-baptism of all who have not been Scripturally baptized either in form or in purpose. A trine immersion is not Scriptural baptism in regard to form. Then an immersion for the purpose of becoming a member of any church, or even of the Church of Christ, instead of being immersed for the purpose of obeying Christ, is certainly not a Scriptural baptism in regard to purpose. Obedience to Christ should be the supreme idea in every mind when the body in which that mind dwells is immersed in water, and raised again to walk in newness of life.

But what should we say of those who contend for the re-immersion of all who did not understand, at the time of their immersion, what is meant by the expression "for the remission of sins, " as that expression is recorded in Acts 2:38?

We should say of them that they might as well contend for the re-immersion of all who did not understand, at the time of their immersion, what is meant by the expression, "and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," as that expression is found in the same scripture.

Who was Tyrannus, of whom we read in the 9th verse of this chapter? The Sacred Text does not inform us.

Did Paul become a teacher of secular learning in the school of Tyrannus? The text does not intimate that he did, but it clearly implies that he confined himself to teaching "the word of the Lord."

What may we say to those who contend for religio-secular colleges to teach persons in religion, and to furnish secular employment for certain preachers, because Paul taught "the word of the Lord" in the school of Tyrannus? We may say to them that they reason as those do who contend for a mourners' bench because Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn," and as those do who contend for infant baptism because Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." All interpretation of law which creates new law, or new institutions, is vicious, and subversive of all law to which it is applied.

What may we learn by considering the record given in this chapter of the effort made by "certain of the vagabond Jews," to use the name of Christ for the purpose of casting out evil spirits? We may learn that they could not conjure by means of the name of Jesus, and the speech of the man in whom the evil spirit was, at that time, indicated that he did not recognize that they had any authority.

And what may we learn by considering the 19th verse? We may learn that those who suffered themselves to be brought under the influence of the Gospel at ancient Ephesus, while Paul was preaching there, were certainly sincere in their profession of faith in Christ. They decided to turn from their evil practices, and to end those practices as far as they had the power to do so.

What kind of a man was Demetrius who is first mentioned in the 24th verse? He was a genuine sectarian, and had the disposition that sectarian preachers, generally, manifest, in some measure, when they learn that by the success of the truth their "craft is in danger." They make their living by their preaching, and any doctrine which threatens to deprive them of their living, by convincing people that their

preaching is erroneous, stirs their anger and their vengeance. As a result they become persecutors, as a rule, to the extent that the law of the land in which they are living will suffer them to persecute.

What kind of a man was the “townclerk” at Ephesus? He was a sensible man who knew how to appease the wrath of a mob. He had good regulative ability, and was worthy of the position he occupied as an official in the city of Ephesus, if we may judge by his speech to the mob which Demetrius had caused to be gathered.

CHAPTER XX

What is recorded in this chapter? Mention is first made of Paul's departure from Ephesus, and his entrance into Greece, also of the time he spent on his way to Troas, and what he did while at Troas, with an account of certain events which transpired while he was there. Next we find mention of Paul's departure from Troas, and of his arrival at a place called Miletus, also of what he did while at Miletus by way of sending for the elders of the church at Ephesus, and what he said to them. The chapter is ended with mention of the sorrow which those elders felt when they were informed by Paul that they should not see his face any more.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the worship at Troas? It is a very important record in that it informs us concerning the time when disciples met to break bread, or attend to the communion, commonly designated “the Lord's supper.” What may we say to those who inform us that as the word “day” is not in the Greek text in the 7th verse we should not use it? We should say to them that they might say the same in regard to Matthew 28:1, and several other scriptures. Christ arose on the first day of the week, and the disciples met on the first day of the week. In regard to both events the word “day” is implied, and that is satisfactory for all who wish to be informed concerning the facts on both occasions. The example of the church at Troas is sufficient for all those who wish to understand when the church met to worship when it was first established. Those who wish to deviate from that example can find something in the record to criticize. The Bible does not make provision against either dishonesty or rebellion. The Holy Spirit has given us a record which honest minds may understand, and those inclined to be obedient may (bey, but which all others will find fault with. As the

Greek word for “day” is omitted in the 7th verse we are at liberty to meet either in the day time or at night.

What may we say to those who choose one first day of every month, or of every three months, or of every six months, or of every year, and designate that “communion Sunday”? We may inform them that such a choice is according to their own minds, or hearts, and it suggests that of which we read in 1 Kings 12:33. As Jeroboam, a wicked king, “devised of his own heart” a month for a feast which God had not commanded, so those to whom reference has just been made “devise” of their “own heart” a certain “first day of the week” which the Lord has not commanded. All such follow the example of a wicked king, rather than the example of the church at Troas when under Apostolic approval.

What does the 8th verse of this chapter indicate? It indicates that as the church at Troas used lights when it held a meeting at night so we may have lights when we have a meeting at night.

What is indicated in the 11th verse? The indication is that the brethren gave Paul something to eat before they suffered him to depart from them after preaching to them during much of the night. But what shall we say to those who tell us that the breaking of bread mentioned in the 11th verse is the same that is referred to in the 7th verse? We should say to them that the expression “and eaten” forbids such a conclusion, as that expression is not found connected with the Lord's supper. See the difference between the 42nd and 46th verses of the second chapter of this book. In the 42nd verse reference is made to the communion, while in the 46th verse reference is made to daily eating of food. The former verse does not make mention of eating, the latter does. Though the word eat is sometimes used in regard to the Lord's supper, yet we do not find that it is used so as to intimate that it referred to eating food to satisfy hunger. Besides, in the 11th verse of this chapter the reference is entirely to the Apostle Paul, as anyone may see by reading it with care. See also the meaning of the expression “began to eat” in chapter 27:35.

What should we say to those who declare that the 21st verse of this chapter authorizes them to preach repentance before faith? We should say to them that if they would read that verse aright they would find that it does not authorize anything of that kind. Both Jews and Greeks had sinned

against God before the Gospel was made known to them, and, therefore, they were taught to repent toward God, and then to believe on Christ. What was then required of Jews and Greeks is now required of all others who are in similar condition. But in Bible lands Christ is, generally, made known to mankind as fully as God is made known. Besides, as Christ is King the disobedient in Bible lands have sinned against Christ even as they have sinned against God. Finally, Hebrews 11:6 forbids the conclusion that either toward God or Christ repentance should be preached before faith, for “without faith it is impossible to please him.”

Should we follow Paul's example in regard to finishing his “course with joy”? We should certainly follow it. Every day we should so live that we may finish our course with joy.

Can a preacher of Christ be “pure from the blood of all men,” and, thus, be free from responsibility for their sins, if he shuns to declare “all the counsel of God” as far as he may have been able to learn it and declare it? The 26th and 27th verses indicate that he can not.

What may we learn by taking the 17th and 28th verses of this chapter together? We may learn that the men who were designated “elders” in the 17th verse are addressed as “overseers” in the 28th verse. Therefore the elders of the church were spoken of as “overseers.” The Greek word here translated “overseers” is translated by the word “bishops” in Philippians 1:1.

Are the duties of elders mentioned in this connection? Two of their duties are mentioned, namely, to “feed the church,” and to “watch” for its welfare.

What did Paul mention as the chief dangers to which the church would be exposed? Danger from bad men whom he designates as “grievous wolves,” who would enter the flock, and danger from men who would rise up from among the elders, and speak “perverse things to draw away disciples after them.”

Did Paul set an unselfish example among the saints at Ephesus? He set just the kind of example that every preacher and every elder, especially, should follow. It is a good example for all disciples to follow.

What may we conclude from the declaration recorded in the last verse of this chapter? We may conclude that the elders of Ephesus either did not think much of the church of which they were overseers, or they did not appreciate what Paul

said to them concerning the future of that church, for they sorrowed more because they should not see Paul any more than they did over the evils which Paul said would befall the church. But such has been the weakness of mankind, generally, in all ages.

CHAPTER XXI

Of what do we read in this chapter? We read of the passage of Paul by ship from Miletus to Tyre, and thence to Caesarea, and thence to Jerusalem. Next we read of the favorable reception given to Paul by the brethren at Jerusalem, of the effort he made to overcome prejudice against himself, of the failure of that effort, of the mob that was gathered against him, and of the fact that he was taken in hand by the Roman soldiers in order to save him from death by the mob which consisted of unbelieving Jews.

What should we conclude in regard to Paul's determination to go to Jerusalem contrary to that which the Holy Spirit said to him? In chapter 19:21 we learn that Paul purposed "in the spirit" "to go to Jerusalem." That was his purpose in his own "spirit," but certain disciples at Tyre "through the Spirit" told him "that he should not go up to Jerusalem." Yet Paul went, and the 13th verse intimates that he was seeking martyrdom. Therefore he went to Jerusalem, and as his effort, made at the suggestion of the Apostle James, to allay the prejudice of the unbelieving Jews, failed, he was made a prisoner, and remained a prisoner till his death. Of course if the Lord had, by the Holy Spirit, said to Paul, directly, that he should not go to Jerusalem then he would not have gone. In chapter 16:7 we have an instance of the Spirit in a direct manner preventing Paul and others from doing what they desired to do. But here, in this chapter, the Holy Spirit bore testimony to Paul through others, and left the question with him. He went contrary to the Spirit's warnings, and suffered the results. On the same principle many venture to go contrary to the words of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the New Testament, and they suffer the results.

What is meant by the declaration in the 8th verse that Philip, the evangelist, "was one of the seven"? He was one of the seven who were chosen as deacons, or temporal ministers, for the church at Jerusalem. See chapter 6:5.

What may we say of the advice that James gave to Paul in regard to keeping the law? It was the advice of policy, and

was a complete failure. The effort of James and Paul to modify the feelings of unreasonable men, and the results of that effort, clearly indicate that when men are unreasonable we only waste time when we try to reason with them. As we may not understand before making an effort to modify their feelings what the depth of their unreasonableness is, we are justified in trying to modify them. But we need not be surprised if we fail to do them any good.

Did Paul do wrong in purifying himself with men who had “a vow on them”? No. He did so under the direction of the Apostle James, and he had a right to do so as he was a member of the Jewish nation. Vows were voluntary matters, yet when a Jew made a vow the Lord gave him directions about observing it. But the lesson for us in regard to the entire effort is that it resulted in failure to modify the feelings of unbelieving Jews who had cherished a hatred for Paul. This indicates the intensity of religious prejudice and hatred which may dwell in human minds and hearts. As it was while Paul was on earth, so it is now, and so it will be, in all probability, till the end of time. Mankind are liable to be imposed on by falsehoods, and when through falsehood a man receives a bad name, then he is in danger. A mob may be raised against him at any time, and he may be put to death without a hearing.

CHAPTER XXII

And what is here recorded for our learning? We find a record of Paul's speech in his own defense as he “stood on the stairs” of “the castle” at Jerusalem, also a record of its effect on those who heard it, and, finally, a record of Paul's declaration of his Roman citizenship, and its results. To be more explicit we may say he made a speech in which he gave an account of himself in regard to nationality, and education, and religion, also in regard to persecution of the church, his own conversion, and what the Lord had revealed to him concerning the disposition of the Jews toward him, and that he had also revealed that he would send him to the Gentiles. The effect that this revelation had on the minds of the unbelieving Jews is next mentioned, and the fact that Paul was then taken into the castle. The chapter is ended with mention of Paul in the hands of the Roman soldiers.

What may we say of the 9th verse of this chapter in the light of chapter 9:7? We may say that there is a difference be-

tween hearing and understanding. It is possible to hear a voice without understanding what it means.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of Paul's conversion? We may learn that, as a believing and praying penitent, Saul of Tarsus at Damascus was not pardoned, or saved from his sins. Though he was so intensely in earnest that he did neither eat nor drink for a period of three days, yet he was not pardoned. This is clearly indicated by the 16th verse.

What should we say to those who declare that Paul's sins were actually pardoned when he believed, but were not formally washed away till he was baptized? We should say to them that their idea of actual and formal salvation is certainly taught in the Jewish law, and it is certainly not taught in the Gospel. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," is the Savior's declaration in Mark 16:16, and this is explained by Acts 2:38. In those scriptures we do not find even an intimation in favor of the idea that there is an actual and a formal salvation. Nor do we find it anywhere else in the New Testament as a part of the Gospel. That doctrine is purely fanciful, and is the outgrowth of an effort to defend an erroneous notion concerning a sinner's salvation.

What is referred to in the 28th verse of this chapter? The custom of the Romans to permit a man of a captive nation to purchase his freedom, and become a Roman citizen, is referred to in the former part of that verse, and their custom to regard that one free who had been born of a nation after it had been made captive, is referred to in the latter part of it. As Paul was born in Tarsus, the chief city in Cilicia, which had long been under Roman rule, he was "free born."

CHAPTER XXIII

What is set forth in the record found in this chapter? The record here found sets forth, first of all, a brief account of Paul's speech before the Jewish council at Jerusalem, and of certain events resulting from what he said in that speech. Next we find an account of the encouragement which the Lord gave to Paul, of the purpose of certain Jews to kill him, and how that purpose was defeated, and of the fact that Paul was taken to Caesarea, the political capital of Judea, where he was kept in safety from his Jewish enemies.

What may we learn by considering Paul's first declaration before the Jewish council? We may learn that Paul was sin-

cere, even when he, as Saul of Tarsus, was persecuting the Church. He thought that Jesus was an impostor, and that the Gospel was a heresy. As a result he thought that he ought to oppose the Church with all his might.

Did the fact that he thought he ought to oppose the Church make it right for him to oppose it? No. In 1 Timothy 1:13 we learn that he became “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,” by his opposition to the Church, though he opposed it “in all good conscience.”

What does this fact indicate in regard to the conscience? It indicates that the conscience is that part of the moral man which bears in favor of anything, or against anything, according to convictions. If a man's convictions are right, then his conscience is right, but if his convictions are wrong, then his conscience is wrong. Paul as a Pharisee had a Pharisee's conscience; but after he became a Christian he had a Christian's conscience. On the same principle a heathen has a heathen's conscience, a Jew has a Jew's conscience, a sectarian has a sectarian's conscience, and a Christian has a Christian's conscience.

In view of all this concerning conscience what may we say of the common expression that “a man should worship God according to the dictates of his conscience”? That expression is erroneous in two particulars; first, it implies that conscience is a dictator; second, that it is always right. Instead of conscience being a dictator it is like a ratchet in machinery, which is intended to hold the machinery to that which it has gained by motion. Or, it is like an approving friend who accompanies us through a strange country, and always approves when we follow our guide whether that guide leads us in the right or wrong direction. There never were more serious mistakes imposed on mankind than that conscience is a dictator, and is always right. Yet both of those mistakes are involved in the doctrine that mankind should worship God “according to the dictates of their consciences. “

What is indicated in the confession of ignorance made by Paul, as it is recorded in the 5th verse? It indicates that he was not at all times a discernor of spirits, and, therefore, did not know that the one whom he called a “whited wall” was a “high priest.”

What should we say of the idea that Paul meant he did not know that the one whom he addressed was a “high priest” because the Jewish law had been fulfilled, and the Gospel

did not authorize high priests? The fact that Paul quoted Exodus 22:28 on the subject indicates that his confession of ignorance should be taken in its most evident meaning.

What is implied by the fact that Paul declared himself to be a Pharisee? The implication is that he was not a materialist, and, therefore, was not a soul-sleeper. Though he was a Christian, yet he believed as the Pharisees did in regard to angels, spirits, and the resurrection, because they were right on those questions.

What effect should this fact concerning Paul's belief have on modern materialists who profess to believe the Bible? It should cause them to feel ashamed of their presumption in differing from Paul, and alarmed by reason of their irreverence in differing from the word of God.

What is evident from the disposition which the Pharisees manifested as soon as they learned that he was of their faith in regard to the resurrection? They showed that they were genuine sectarians, and were disposed to favor the man who was of their religious belief in those particulars wherein they differed from the Sadducees. They seemed disposed to defend Paul because he agreed with them in opposition to their common and constant religious enemies. On this principle all sectarians will favor a preacher of Christ while he opposes infidelity which they fear, yet all sectarians will unite against a preacher of Christ when he opposes one of the sectarian denominations.

What is indicated by the record given in this chapter of Paul's deliverance from the Jews, who plotted against his life, and bound themselves with a curse to kill him? The indication is that when God's care is over a man all human plotting against him is in vain. Besides, the indication is that in the Roman Empire the military authority was of advantage in maintaining good order, and in preventing injustice being inflicted on any one. This illustrates what Paul meant when he wrote of "the higher powers" in Romans 13:1-6. The God of heaven is a God of order, and he desires all nations, even heathen nations, to maintain good order. Those who are in official position in all human governments are recognized of God as his "ministers" for the purpose of regulating the unruly.

CHAPTER XXIV

What is set forth in this chapter for the benefit of Bible readers? We find an account of the high priest, and certain

others from Jerusalem, down at Caesarea, of the effort they made to inform the governor against Paul. Then we read an account of Paul's response to that which was said against him at that time. Next we are informed of what the governor said, of the treatment he gave to Paul, of the fact that he afterward sent for Paul, and heard him concerning Christ, also of the effect of Paul's speech to him, and of that which he afterward did with reference to him.

What may we say of the speech which was made against Paul by a certain orator? It was oratorical; that is, it was made up of flattery for the governor, of extravagance against Paul, and falsehood concerning the chief captain.

And what may we say of Paul's speech? It was not oratorical, yet it was the eloquence of fact and truth.

What may we learn by carefully examining the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul summed up the entire Gospel that he preached in the doctrine of the resurrection. How could he do this? In 1 Corinthians 15:12-22 we are informed, for we there learn that the final salvation of mankind is dependent on their resurrection from the dead, and the resurrection of all mankind is dependent on the resurrection of Christ from the dead. In chapter 26:6-8 we find more on this subject, likewise in chapter 28:20.

What was the bearing of Paul's preaching before Felix, when he "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come"? In his reasoning concerning "righteousness" he spoke of right-doing, or fair-dealing between man and man. In thus reasoning he gave Felix an opportunity to understand his own official sins. In his reasoning in regard to "temperance" he set forth the subject of self-control, and gave Felix an opportunity to understand wherein he had been guilty of personal sins in his lack of self-control. Then in his reasoning with reference to "judgment to come" he enabled Felix to consider himself and his conduct, both official and personal, in view of his responsibility to God. The effect indicates that Felix made a personal application of Paul's reasoning, for the record declares that he "trembled."

Why did not Felix yield to the power of the truth which caused him to tremble? We are not informed, and, therefore, cannot definitely decide in regard to his case. But in view of the general disposition of mankind we may safely say that he did not yield because of pride. In 1 Timothy

3:6 we find the intimation that the devil became a condemned character because of pride, and the same has been true of all his children among mankind. God's children may err through ignorance, or impulsiveness, but they become the devil's children when through pride they refuse to repent.

What disposition did Felix show when he spoke of a “convenient season”? He showed a common weakness, and indicated that he proposed a compromise in regard to time. The divine doctrine is, “Now is the accepted time,” but the children of the devil when convicted of their sins have often, in one form or another, said to the faithful friend who convicted them, “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.”

Did Governor Felix ever have that “convenient season”? He did, as far as time was concerned. But his opportunity for obedience and salvation seem to have been ended with the occasion mentioned in the 25th verse. After that occasion he seemed cold and indifferent. He sent for Paul and communed with him in order to learn if he might not be able to secure a bribe for his release. Here is a warning which should strike terror into the hearts of all those who trifle with the Holy Spirit's reasoning through the word of truth. If they reject that reasoning, even once, they may never again be seriously impressed.

CHAPTER XXV

What is recorded in this chapter? A record is here given of Governor Festus, who succeeded Governor Felix, in official position, and of the fact that he went to Jerusalem, and there heard charges against Paul, also of the fact that he went to Caesarea, the political capital, and there heard what those Jews who went there from Jerusalem to accuse Paul before him were disposed to say. The record here given also informs us that in the midst of that which then occurred Paul felt constrained to “appeal to Caesar.” This chapter also informs us concerning arrangements that were made for Paul to speak for himself before a certain king named Agrippa, who visited Festus at Caesarea.

What is indicated by the fact that the Jews at Jerusalem were disposed to persecute Paul, even after he had been a prisoner for two years? The indication is that their religious hatred of Paul was not of a spasmodic kind. On the contrary, it was settled and relentless. What they could not accomplish in the days of Felix they were determined to do in the days of his successor,

What may we conclude from the fact of their failure to accomplish their evil designs against Paul? We may conclude that when God's care is over any person all human plans against that one will fail, except as God may suffer them to succeed so as to accomplish his own designs.

What was the meaning of Paul's "appeal unto Caesar"? The meaning was that he exercised his right as a Roman citizen to be heard by the Emperor of Rome before sentence should be pronounced against him.

What may we learn from Paul's example? We may learn that Christians have the right to appeal even to the highest court in the governments under which they live in order to secure justice against their enemies, especially in cases of self-defense. In view of this, what may we say to those who declare that it is wrong for Christians to have anything to do with civil governments, except to pay taxes? We may safely say that they know not the privilege which the example of Paul gives to Christians in regard to civil governments.

What should we say to those who endeavor to convict Luke of error in view of the fact that Augustus is mentioned by him in the 21st verse, as Emperor of Rome at that time, when, in fact, Nero was then emperor? We should say to them that if they would read Roman history sufficiently to know that the name of a predecessor was sometimes retained, and applied to his successor, they would not be so critical except by reason of a desire to find fault without just cause. Augustus Caesar was a former emperor of Rome, and, therefore, the name Augustus may have been applied to Nero. This, at least, is a reasonable explanation, and will satisfy all reasonable persons. As for those who are unreasonable, in their desire to censure the writers of the Sacred Text, they cannot be satisfied. If confuted on one question they at once search for another on which to harp as critics.

CHAPTER XXVI

Of what are Bible readers informed in the chapter to which our attention is now invited? We are informed of Paul's speech before King Agrippa, Governor Festus, and others, also of the interruption of that speech by Festus, and of the effect it had on Agrippa. The chapter is ended with a statement of the conclusion of Agrippa concerning Paul's innocence of the charges made against him by the Jews who had persecuted him.

In view of the fact that the "twelve tribes" of the Jewish

nation are mentioned in the 7th verse as “instantly serving God day and night,” what may we say of those who speak of “the lost ten tribes,” when referring to the kingdom of Israel? We may say that the Sacred Text does not acknowledge, nor even intimate, that any tribe was lost, except the tribe of Dan, which is omitted in John's mention of the tribes in Revelation 7:5-8. On the contrary, Paul, in the chapter before us, makes mention of the “twelve tribes,” and so does the Apostle James in the beginning of his letter. Therefore, all history which represents ten tribes of Israel as “lost” should be received at a discount in that particular. The authors of all such history showed ignorance of the New Testament.

What may we learn by considering the 6th, 7th and 8th verses of this chapter together? We may learn that the resurrection of the dead was the doctrine on which Paul regarded the Gospel as dependent. In 1 Corinthians 15:12-22, Paul reasoned as if the entire Gospel was a falsehood, and all hope, as based on the Gospel, was in vain, if the dead would not be raised, and next he reasoned that if the dead are not to be raised, then Christ was not raised. But on the truth of what he preached concerning Christ's resurrection he affirmed the resurrection of all mankind, and this he declared was “the promise,” and “the hope” of Israel. This is clearly indicated by the question found in the 8th verse, and by the declaration found in chapter 28:20.

What is indicated in the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter when considered together? The indication is that Paul was entirely sincere, when, as Saul of Tarsus, he persecuted the Church and wasted it. He had drunk so freely of the sectarian wine which the Pharisees furnished that he thought he was doing God's service when he was persecuting the Church of God to its destruction.

What is indicated by the word “blaspheme,” as recorded in the 11th verse? The indication is that some of those who were persecuted by Saul of Tarsus denied their faith, and rejected Christ.

How many purposes did Christ have in appearing to Saul of Tarsus? He had two purposes. One was to make him “a minister and a witness”; the other was to send him to the Gentiles to “turn them from darkness to light.” What was meant by making Saul “a minister and a witness”? The meaning was that he should be made an “apostle.” See 1 Corinthians 9:1. He needed to see Christ, after his res-

urrection, in order to be a “witness” that he was certainly raised from the dead. In view of this, what may we say of those who now speak of being “witnesses for Jesus”? They do not seem to understand the meaning of the word “witness,” for they must know that they have not “seen Jesus Christ.”

But what should we say if informed by certain persons that they really “have seen Jesus Christ”? We should demand of them that they shall show by their record, as Paul did, that Jesus Christ had appeared to them. If they fail to do this we should pronounce them self-deceived, and expose them as pretenders.

What use can Bible readers make of the 18th verse of this chapter? We can use it to show that Christ intended that Paul should “turn” the Gentiles “from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. “ Then as Paul did his work, in turning them, by preaching the Gospel unto them, Bible readers may use this verse to show that the Gospel is the divinely ordained turning power now, even as it was while Paul was personally preaching it to the Gentiles.

And what use may we make of the expression “forgiveness of sins,” as found in the 18th verse? That expression sets forth the only condition on which mankind can be acceptable to God. They cannot balance accounts with Him by doing good works, nor by any other offering; but they must obey the Gospel and thereby receive “forgiveness of sins.”

What is revealed in the 20th verse? A revelation is here made that the expression “turn to God”, refers to baptism, for they are both required after repentance. This explains Acts 3:19, where we find the command, “Repent ye therefore and be converted. “ The same Greek word which is, in that passage, translated “be converted” is here translated 'turn' . And when we consider that in baptism we give our bodies to be buried and raised again, also that we do this in the name of the Godhead, and that we thereby “put on Christ”, then we can understand why baptism is referred to as a turning to God.

Is the 23rd verse in harmony with all else that is said in the Sacred Text on the resurrection of the dead? It is, because reference is here made to a resurrection from the dead to die “no more”. See Romans 6:9. Lazarus, and others who were raised from the dead, did not have this assurance, if we may judge by the silence of the record concerning them. But Christ was raised to immortality, and in that sense he became the “first fruits of them that slept.” See I Corinthians

15:20; Colossians 1:18. He was the first fruits to immortality.

What did King Agrippa mean when he said, to Paul, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,” as we find in the 28th verse? The king's declaration, as here recorded, means what it says. He was almost persuaded to accept the doctrine that Paul had preached to him. If he had allowed himself to be fully persuaded he would have accepted it, and would, thereby, have become a Christian. But as he “rose up”, and turned from Paul's presence, he did not accept the Gospel, and, as far as the record informs us, he never had another opportunity to accept it. What effect should this have on all those who hear the Gospel said are impressed with its requirements? They should fear to trifle with those requirements.

CHAPTER XXVII

And what may we here learn? We may learn concerning Paul's passage from Caesarea to the island called Melita, where the ship on which Paul was carried, and was held as a prisoner, was wrecked.

Was Paul informed of the shipwreck so that he foretold it? He was. The Lord sent an angel to inform him concerning what should befall the ship, and also that he and all on board of the ship should escape, and their lives should be spared.

What may we say of the 33rd verse? The Greek text does not authorize the expression “having taken nothing”, which implies that they had not eaten anything for nearly fourteen days. The word here translated nothing means “not even; not so much as”. In Mark 2:2 it is translated “not so much as. “ This is the idea in the verse before us. Paul said to them that they had “not taken so much as”—meaning not so much as was needful for them, or had not, at any time, in fourteen days, taken as much as a full meal.

What may we gather from the 35th verse? We may gather that the expression “began to eat” indicates what is meant by the expression “and eaten” in chapter 20:11. Here the expression “began to eat” follows what is said about breaking bread; in chapter 20:11 the expressions “broken bread and eaten” come together. This is sufficient. These two scriptures both refer to the eating of food to satisfy hunger, and therefore Acts 20:11 cannot refer to the communion. As Bible readers we should use scripture to explain scripture, and thereby compare “spiritual things with spiritual.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

What is set forth in this chapter, the last in the book we are now considering? The experience of Paul and those with him, on the Island Melita, is first set forth, which includes mention of miracles that he wrought while there, and the honors with which he, and those with him, were treated before they left that island. We next find mention of Paul's departure from Melita, of his voyage toward Rome, and, finally, of his arrival at Rome. Then the record sets forth what he did after arriving there, how he was received by Jews who had not become believers in Christ, and what the results of his reasoning with them were. The chapter is ended with an account of that which Paul did during two years in the city of Rome.

What conclusion may we safely reach concerning the kindness of the barbarous people on the Island Melita? Their kindness to the shipwrecked people who were cast upon their island shows that they were capable of showing compassion toward those who had suffered misfortunes, and this fact is against the doctrine of "total depravity." Even "barbarous people" have some good in them.

And what may we conclude from the fact that Paul "gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire"? We may conclude that here is an example for Christians to follow when in any place that is too cold for their comfort. Why do we need such an example? Because certain professed Christians say that we have not the slightest Bible authority for building a fire in a meeting house.

Why do any professed Christians object to any one having a fire in a meeting house? Because they wish musical instruments in their meeting houses, and when censured for putting such instruments in those houses they endeavor to convict those who censure them of inconsistency. Therefore they say to them, "You haven't any authority for fire in your meeting houses." In response to such subterfuge we should refer to the fact that Paul helped to increase a fire to dispel the cold on the Island Melita, and the only being that had any objection to that fire was a serpent. To this we should add, that the only being who now has objection to Christians having a fire in their places of meeting is "that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world." (Revelation 12:9.) Nor will it be too severe to say that those who use the bluff and sophistry which has just been exposed are children of the devil, or are preparing themselves to become his children. The false reasoning of such per-

sons may give us some temporary discomfort, as the bite of the serpent that came out of the fire on the Island Melita, probably, gave Paul. But such reasoning cannot poison us, and by reference to the serpent that bit Paul we can shake such religious reptiles off in the fire of infamy which they have kindled.

What prophecy, or promise, of the Savior was fulfilled by the fact that Paul was proof against the poison of the serpent that bit him on the Island Melita? The promise in regard to “serpents” as found in Mark 16:18.

What may we say of the conclusion of the barbarians on the Island Melita when they saw that Paul was bitten of a serpent? That conclusion shows that they possessed a sense of justice, or of punishment for wrong. Is a sense of justice universal in mankind? It is; and to this Paul referred in Romans 2:14, 15. It is the light which is in mankind by nature, or, is the law “written in their hearts,” and it is the law by which mankind will be judged in the day of final accounts. Those who have had a special law given to them, either orally, or in written form, will be judged by that special law. But those who have never had any special law, and to whom such law will never have been given, will be judged by the light of nature, external and internal light, which God has given to all mankind.

And what may we say of the change in conclusion, on the part of the barbarians on Melita, with reference to Paul, when they saw that he endured without harm the bite of a serpent? They showed themselves possessed of the impulsiveness of human nature. Their minds passed from one extreme conclusion to another. They first thought Paul was “a murderer, “ and then concluded that he was “a God.” Then when Paul wrought miracles on their island they “honored” him and others “ with many honors, “ and when they “departed” they “laded” them “with such things as were necessary.”

And what may we conclude from the fact that Paul received gifts from grateful barbarisms? We may conclude that Christians may now receive gifts from grateful aliens. This does not mean that Christians should beg alien sinners for gifts, nor beg any one else for gifts, but it means that if alien sinners, who are respectable, so appreciate our efforts to do good that they are disposed to favor us with gifts we may receive their gifts. But if aliens who are not respectable, or who are not engaged in respectable business, offer us gifts we should reject them, because to accept them would have the appearance of evil. Besides, Matthew 10:11 has

a bearing in this direction. Jesus did not intend that his disciples should stay in the home of an unworthy man, nor should Christians receive gifts from disreputable people.

What may we learn by considering the 22nd verse? We may learn that by unbelieving Jews the Church of Christ was spoken of as a “sect,” which means “heresy, choice, faction, party.” From their viewpoint the Church of Christ was a “sect” or party, but from the divine viewpoint it was the only body of religious persons that was then authorized to exist for the salvation of mankind. Besides, from the verse under consideration we may learn that the only body of religious persons then in existence by divine authority was “everywhere” “spoken against.”

Is the word “sect” ever used in a good sense in the Bible? It is not. The Greek word translated “sect” is of unfavorable meaning. It means “a choice or option, faction,” and by implication it means “discord, contention.” As the Church of Christ was, from a Jewish viewpoint, a matter of “choice,” and was a “faction,” it was, therefore, designated “this sect” by the unbelieving Jews at Rome. But since the Church of Christ was first established every other religious body, as such, has, in God's sight, been a heresy, sect, or faction. Before the Gospel began to be fully preached God suffered all nations to “walk in their own ways,” and passed over the ignorance of mankind, but now he commands “all men everywhere to repent.” See Acts 14:16; 17:30.

Is the Church of Christ still “spoken against”? Yes, it is “everywhere” “spoken against.” Roman Catholics and all other sects, including the compromised Christian church, with all grades of infidelity, speak against the Church of Christ. Of that Church it is still true that “everywhere it is spoken against.”

What is indicated in the 23rd verse? The fairness in the Jews at Rome is first indicated, and next the earnestness of Paul is indicated. The Jews “appointed him a day” and they went “to him into his lodging” to hear what he desired to say, and when they came to him “he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.”

What effect did his expounding and testifying and persuading have on them? “Some believed the things which were spoken and some believed not.” In view of this what should be our conclusion if some do not believe what we say to them

concerning Christ? We should not be discouraged. If inspired teachers and preachers could not convince all their hearers, we need not be surprised if we do not convince all who hear us. There are multitudes of whom it is still true, that “their eyes they have closed.”

What may we safely infer from the 30th and 31st verses of this chapter? We may infer that it is right for Christians to hire or rent a house to preach the Gospel in. Paul preached “the kingdom of God,” for “two whole years” in “his own hired house.” Why do we need to consider the question of meeting houses? Only because certain professed Christians desire to prevent the churches of Christ from having a meeting-house in which to worship God and preach the Gospel.

But why have they any such desire? Only because the churches of Christ oppose musical instruments and other humanisms in religious worship and work. As an offset to such opposition those professed Christians declare that churches of Christ cannot find scripture authority for meeting-houses. In answer to them we refer to chapter 2:2; 20:8, and the last verses in the chapter now before us, and thereby show that the churches of Christ have scriptural examples for houses of worship. We also refer to John 6:12 and show that the principle of economy there enjoined requires churches of Christ to own meeting-houses whenever it is more economical to own them than to rent them.

And, now, what may we conclude concerning the Book of Acts as a document? It is the central document of the volume titled the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is central in thought, and central in the body of writings which make up the New Testament. The Gospel records precede it, and make known to us the Lord Jesus Christ; the epistolary writings follow it, and make known to us the law of Christ for individual Christians and churches of Christ. In view of the central position of the Book of Acts it must be studied with care by all readers of the New Testament in order to appreciate the value of that which precedes it, and of that which follows it. If it had been omitted from the New Testament mankind might have justly complained that the New Testament is not plain, and they might apologize for the confusion which exists in the religious world concerning the duty of alien sinners in becoming Christians, and the duty of Christians in banding themselves together as congregations of worshipers. But as the Book of Acts has been offered to mankind, in the midst of the New Testament, they are certainly without excuse if they do not learn what is necessary for alien sinners to do

in order to become Christians. They are likewise without excuse if they do not, as churches, composed of Christians, adopt the simple congregational government which is set forth in this book. It is the book which, above all others of the entire Bible, will justify Christ in pronouncing sentence of condemnation upon the confusion which now exists in regard to the conversion of sinners, and establishing churches of Christ. What the alien sinner must do to become a Christian is set forth so plainly in this book that those who live in Bible lands, and have sufficient sense to be responsible, are certainly without excuse if they do not understand what is required of them on this question, or understanding what is required will not conform to it in humble, wholehearted obedience.

ROMANS

CHAPTER I

To whom was this letter written, and what was Paul's purpose in writing it? It was written to the “saints” at Rome, who were chiefly, if not wholly, of Gentile nationality. See chapter 11:13. Paul's purpose in writing this letter was to instruct, and encourage, and warn, the saints whom he addressed, in regard to their life as Christians, also to put into their hands such facts, and truths, and arguments, concerning unbelieving Gentiles and Jews, that they might understand, confute, confound, and, if possible, convince them of the sin of their unbelief concerning the Gospel.

This letter is a three-fold document. It was written to Christians for their special benefit, but was intended also to help them to benefit the unbelieving Gentiles on the one hand, and the unbelieving Jews on the other. Seventeen verses of the first chapter were addressed to the saints at Rome whose faith was such that it was widely spoken of. Beginning with the 18th verse we find that unbelieving Gentiles were referred to even to the end of the 31st verse. Then reference was made to unbelieving Jews, and this reference was continued nearly altogether to the end of the fourth chapter. Then Christians were again referred to chiefly, even to the end of the 6th chapter. The 7th chapter was specially intended for the unbelieving Jew to show his condition under the Jewish law, and that he should not cling to that law. Then in the 8th chapter Paul again turned to Christians. His purpose in thus writing was to benefit Christians both personally and relatively—personally by informing them what they were and should be, and relatively by furnishing them with exactly what they should say to the heathen about them, also to the unconverted Jews that they might need to instruct. With this analysis of this letter before our minds we can pick out every sentence in it that was specially intended for Christians, every one that was specially intended for the heathen, and every one that was specially intended for the unbelieving Jews. Without this analysis before the mind this letter cannot be understood; but with this analysis

kept in mind it is easily understood. Human commentaries are generally, if not entirely, a blank in regard to this analysis.

What are the outlines of thought in the 1st chapter of this letter? The outlines of this chapter are an address by Paul concerning himself, as a servant and an apostle of Christ, and concerning the spiritual relationship of those whom he addressed, followed by a prayer in their behalf, and an expression of his long desire to go unto them. This is followed by a statement of his purpose in desiring to visit them, and of the fact that he had been prevented from fulfilling that desire. Next he informed them of the obligation which he felt toward all Gentiles, and of his estimate of the gospel of Christ. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a description of the wickedness of the Gentile nations, and mention is made in the last verse of Jews who were equally wicked, and rejoiced in those who committed such wickedness. In connection with this description of wickedness mention is made of God's dealings with the Gentiles because of their wickedness.

What must Bible readers keep in mind in order to understand this chapter? They must keep in mind that the former part, of it refers to believers, and the latter to unbelievers, also that Paul wrote to the believers in Rome concerning unbelievers in order that they might understand them, and, if possible, convince them.

What do the words "servant" and "apostle" mean as recorded in this 1st verse of this chapter? The Greek word here translated "servant" means "bond-servant or slave," and the word translated "apostle" means "one sent" or "one who is sent."

What is indicated in the 4th verse of the chapter before us? The indication is that the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the dead was the crowning miracle of his divinity.

What is meant by the word "called" in the 6th verse? 2 Thessalonians 2:14 answers this question.

What may we learn by considering the 8th verse? The church at Rome was a faithful church, and its members lived, and met for worship, in the chief city of the Roman Empire, which was so extensive that it is spoken of as "the whole world." Persons from all parts of the empire came to their chief city, and there they learned of the faith of the church in that city, and were so impressed with it that they spoke of it when they returned to their homes.

What may preachers learn by reading the 9th and 10th verses? They may learn that as Paul was prayerful in behalf of the church at Rome, and in regard to his proposed journey to Rome, so they should be in regard to the churches of Christ everywhere, and with reference to all their journeys. But are preachers the only ones who should pray for the churches of Christ? No. They should set the example in that direction, and all other Christians should follow it.

What is the meaning of the word translated “let” in the 13th verse? It means “hindered.” The word “let” formerly had that meaning, but is now used in another sense.

What may we learn by considering the expression “other Gentiles” in the last part of the 13th verse? We may learn that the church at Rome consisted of Gentiles, for this is here implied.

And what may we learn by considering the 14th and 15th verses? We may learn that Paul was a genuine missionary. Christ had done so much for him he felt under obligation to all the Gentiles. We may also learn that all Christians should have much of the missionary spirit because of that which Christ has done for us. In view of what he has done for us we should be wholehearted in trying to lead others in the way of salvation.

And what may we learn by considering the 16th and 17th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the gospel of Christ is God's power unto salvation to all believers, both among Jews and Gentiles, for the righteousness of God toward mankind is revealed in it to all who have faith and a continuance of faith. Should we emphasize the definite article “the” as found before the word “power” in the 16th verse? We should not, for it is not found in the Greek text. But the word translated “power” is, perhaps, the strongest word in the Greek language to express that idea. It is the word from which the words “dynamite” and “dynamo” and “dynamics” are derived. Therefore the definite article was not needed before that word, for it is strong enough by itself. The gospel of Christ is God's dynamo, or his dynamite, to move mankind from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. This being true the Gospel is certainly “the power” of God to move mankind in the right direction. Besides, we do not learn that inspired men, who preached the Gospel, ever used any other power to accomplish that end. On the contrary, the Apostle Paul declared that he avoided using the power of “enticing words of man's wisdom,” and gave his reason for avoiding such power.

See 1 Corinthians 3:1-4. This indicates that human devices should be discarded by all preachers of the Gospel, and by all others who endeavor to turn mankind from darkness to light. If human devices are used to lead mankind to obey the Gospel then their faith will, in some degree, stand in those devices, and such devices will be needed to hold them to their faith. Besides, when they become weary of the devices first used they will desire others, and, thus, in course of time, those who adopt such devices will become wholly perverted from the Gospel.

What is the force of the expressions, “righteousness of God,” and “from faith to faith,” as recorded in the 17th verse? The former expression means the right-doing of God; that is, his right treatment of mankind as his divine wisdom and benevolence decided that they should be treated. The latter expression sets forth the idea of continuance. “From faith to faith” is a form of expression that is often used, as, for instance, when we say “from day to day,” and “from step to step.” All such expressions mean continuance, and the idea here is that the divine righteousness is revealed to those who believe and continue to believe. That righteousness does not become manifest to such as have only faith enough to begin their religious life by repentance and confession, but have not faith enough to be baptized. Neither is it made manifest to those who have faith enough to accept the Gospel in its relation to alien sinners as complete, but who regard the Gospel in its relation to Christians as incomplete. That this idea is correct is evident from the declaration that “the just shall live by faith,” with which the verse under consideration is ended.

What may we say of the latter part of this chapter? Excepting the last verse, which refers to the unbelieving Jews, the latter part of this chapter informs us how mankind went into idolatry, and what the result of idolatry was on their morals. In other words, it informs us that those who became worshipers of idols first ignored the light of nature, and that in so doing they professed themselves to be wise, and thereby became “fools.” Then, after becoming “fools” they were ready to turn from the glory of the God of heaven and earth, and imagine that glory to be invested in an “image made like a corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things.” As a result they became so degraded that they went into immorality of the lowest kinds, and became corrupt in every other possible form and degree.

Are there any persons in Bible lands “who hold the truth in unrighteousness”? Yes. All those hold it thus who profess to take the Bible as their guide in religion, yet misuse it for sectarian purposes, by perverting many of its texts to sub-serve the purpose of making a show of proof for human creeds. Those professed disciples who, falsely, pretend to “Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent,” likewise hold the truth in unrighteousness. They hold to the Bible in theory, but vary from it in practice. They use the Bible as a text-book, but adopt a multitude of human devices. They profess to love the Bible, but disregard nearly everything in it which hinders their popularity with the world.

What may we learn by considering the 19th and 20th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul here testifies, even as David did, in the 19th Psalm. David wrote that, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork,” and Paul here declares, concerning God, that, “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” Here we learn that the first adoption of idolatry was “without excuse,” and the heathen's continuance in idolatry is “without excuse.” In harmony with the beginning of the 19th Psalm Paul declares that God's eternal power and Godhead are “clearly seen” by the mind, and thus are “understood” by “the things that are made.” That is to say, he declares that the light of external nature proves the existence of the Being who is worthy to be worshiped as God. This does not mean that external nature informs mankind how to worship God. But it means that nature, as we see it in the sun, moon, and stars; as we see it in the heavens and the earth; as we see it in the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms; and as we behold it in the mysterious constancy of nature's outworkings—all these manifestations of God, when properly considered, prove God's existence, and even prove his “eternal power and Godhead.” Therefore, the heathen are without excuse in turning from God, and in adopting idols. The chief men among them are likewise without excuse in continuing to worship idols, or, even, to tolerate their worship in their domains. The Grecian Socrates made the declaration that there is one true God above all the gods of the heathen, and on account of that declaration he was condemned to die, and thus became a martyr for the truth's sake.

Why did mankind discard the best use of their reason, and

turn from the only true God, and become worshipers of idols? The 28th verse informs us that “they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,” and this explains all disposition to turn from God, both among the heathen, and in Bible lands. The God of heaven and earth restricts mankind, and reproveth them for doing wrong, and, on that account, many of them have, generally, been disposed to turn from him in order to have their own way. Thus it has been; thus it is; and thus it will be, till the close of time.

Will general enlightenment cause the heathen to turn from idolatry? Revelation 9:20, 21 indicate that idolatry will continue among certain nations till the “plagues” of the last days will come upon them, and, even then, will not cease. On the contrary, it will continue till “the kingdoms of this world” will have become “the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,” and then “the nations” will be “angry.” See Revelation 11:15-18. According to these revelations, made through the Apostle John, neither missionary societies, nor general intelligence, nor both combined, will banish idolatry from the earth. Mankind are natural worshipers, and, in order to have their own way, they turn from the God of heaven and earth. Then they form gods of their own and worship them.

What is the last and lowest analysis of idolatry? It is expressed by Paul in the 25th verse of this chapter, especially in the words, “worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator.” According to this analysis are there not multitudes of idolaters, who do not bow down to images of any kind? Yes. All who turn from God for the sake of money, lands, earthly honor, or pleasurable enjoyment, are in spirit idolaters, and the same is true of all who turn from the Bible for the sake of a human creed, or turn from the simplicity in Christ in order to become popular. All such “worship and serve the creature more than the Creator.” The God of heaven and earth said to his ancient people, “I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” (Isaiah 42:8.) Therefore, he will not give his praise to human devices of any kind, not even to churches, nor to any other kinds of societies, to creeds nor instruments of music, nor to any other kinds of human devices which have been adopted in religious worship and work.

What is referred to in the last verse of this chapter? That verse refers to the Jews who did not believe in Christ, but believed in God, and who knew that God's judgment against

the heathen for their immorality and other iniquity was just, yet were guilty of doing the same and taking pleasure in other guilty ones. This verse should not be separated from the following chapter, but should be placed with it, and used as its beginning. Chapter 2:17-29 clearly indicate that the verse we are now considering refers to the Jews who did not believe in Christ.

CHAPTER II

What is set forth for our learning in this chapter? An arraignment of the disobedient Jew is here set forth, in connection with which we find a statement of God's impartial goodness and justice toward both Jews and Gentiles.

Did Paul censure the disobedient Jews because they judged the Gentiles? No. But he censured them because they did the same things which they condemned in the Gentiles. In John 7:24 we learn that the Savior commanded his disciples to judge righteously, and not by appearance only. By this we learn that it is always right to judge aright. But the first verse of the chapter before us warns us against doing those things which we judge are wrong in others.

What may we learn by considering the 4th verse? The last part of that verse informs us that God endeavors by his goodness to lead mankind to repentance. This implies that he desires to win them, and not drive them. God does not endeavor to compel persons to obey him by reason of fear and dread, as slaves obey a tyrannical master, but, rather, as children obey a kind father. He desires that they shall love him because he first loved them. (1 John 4:19.) Christians are commanded to "fear God," (1 Peter 2:17), yet he does not desire that this command shall be obeyed because we are afraid that he will send on us some affliction, but, rather, because we are afraid to offend the One who is our best friend.

How can mankind treasure up unto themselves "wrath against the day of wrath," as is mentioned in the 5th verse? They can do so by persisting in disobedience, and, thereby, incurring the divine displeasure which will be made known in the final Judgment.

What is declared in the 6th verse and onward to the close of the 11th of this chapter? The divine impartiality toward all classes of mankind is declared, likewise the final sentence which God will pronounce through Christ as the judge on both the obedient and the disobedient.

What may we learn by considering the 12th verse, and onward to the close of the 16th? We may learn that both Jews and Gentiles are responsible before God according to the light which they are permitted to enjoy. We may likewise learn that mankind have a "law written in their hearts," by "nature," which the heathen will be judged by in the last day. The indication here is, that they will be justified, or condemned, in proportion as they will have obeyed, or disobeyed, the light of nature, internally given, concerning right and wrong. In Job 38:36 we find mention made of such light in the questions therein propounded concerning "wisdom" and "understanding" which are put into "the heart." In view of all this we learn that mankind have, by nature, two standards by which they will be finally measured. These standards consist of the light of external nature, as mentioned in the 19th and 20th verses of the preceding chapter, and of the light of internal nature, as mentioned in the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter. The former standard is expressed in the declaration that "the invisible things" of God "are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." The latter standard is expressed in the declaration that the Gentiles "show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing them witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." By the former standard the heathen will be measured in regard to their worship, and by the latter standard they will be measured in their work. The worship of idols is contrary to the light of external nature, and all works of injustice toward mankind, and of immorality, are contrary to the light of internal nature. Therefore we should not say that the heathen, who do not have God's law, as written in the Bible, are altogether without law. They are not in possession of God's written law in documentary form, yet they have by nature two laws, one to guide them in their Godward relations, and the other to guide them in their manward relations. The same is true of those who have the Bible. They have all the law by nature, that the heathen have, and, in addition, they have the law of God in documentary form. Therefore, those who have the Bible will be judged by the light of nature, external and internal, and especially by the Bible.

Do those who have the Bible sometimes sin against the light of nature, and thereby place themselves on a level with the heathen? They do, and, in many instances, they place themselves below the best of the heathen. The report is made that a certain emperor of China refused to consider the ques-

tion of placing a tax on the opium trade because, as he said, he could not receive a revenue from any traffic which inflicts misery on his people. By such refusal he acted according to the light of nature, and, thus, according to the law written in his heart by nature. In view of this the declaration may be safely made, that all persons in Bible lands, who demand, or even consent, that their government shall receive a revenue from a traffic which inflicts misery on their people, disregard the light of nature, and place themselves below a certain heathen.

Is Christ the author of the light of nature? He is, for he is “the Word” by whom all things were made. See John 1:1-4. In view of this we may understand that John 1:9 is strictly true. Christ “lighteth” every man that cometh into the world “by the light of nature” which he made when he brought this material world into existence according to the will of Jehovah.

What may we say of the remainder of this chapter? It sets forth a part of Paul's arraignment of the un-Christian Jew, who believed in God, and made his boast in the law, yet was not as good, in some respects, as was the heathen Gentile.

Why was it necessary for Paul to write as he did to “the saints” at Rome concerning the un-Christian Jew as well as concerning the un-Christian Gentile? Those saints dwelt among such Jews and Gentiles, and they needed to be informed, in regard to their real standing before God, so that they might confute them, and, if possible, convince them of their sins—both religious and irreligious sins.

What may we say of Paul's style in arraigning the unbelieving Jew? He began by making statements, and continued by asking questions, then made charges, and ended by making comparisons. His statements mentioned advantages, his questions made intimations, his charges mentioned guilt, and his comparisons implied condemnation. What is the general effect of such style in presenting thought to the human mind? It is to gain attention, disarm prejudice, convince, and lead to change.

What may we learn by considering the 25th and 26th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Jewish circumcision had a moral bearing, though it was a fleshly mark, and did not require a moral qualification in order to be received. The end which God had in view when he gave it to Abraham was outward separation from all heathen worship, and inward separation from all unholiness and all unrighteousness. We may

learn also that the moral end which God had in view when he gave circumcision was morally annulled when those who received it violated the law that he had given to them. On the other hand, we may learn that when those who had not received circumcision so lived that its moral end was accomplished in them, then their uncircumcised condition was morally annulled. Does this authorize us to conclude that if those who are not baptized live good, pious lives, then their unbaptized condition will be morally annulled? It does not. Such a conclusion would only be an unauthorized inference, and should not be adopted as a basis for doctrine. If baptism had been ordained for infants, and, therefore, did not require a moral qualification as its condition, then such a conclusion as that just mentioned might be reasonable by human comparison, but even then it would not be made certain by divine testimony. The divine doctrine is "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11.) This doctrine, and only this doctrine, can give certainty in religious faith and practice. All else is fallible and uncertain.

What is the bearing of the 28th and 29th verses of this chapter? They indicate that if the moral conditions which God had in view in giving fleshly circumcision were not accomplished in the Jew, then it was morally annulled. This does not mean that it was annulled in a fleshly, nor in a national, sense, but that it became uncircumcision in a moral sense. The indication here is also that to be a Jew in the strictest sense was to be a correct man inwardly as well as a circumcised man outwardly.

Why was it necessary for Paul to write as he did concerning the Jew? In order to prevent him from relying on his fleshly circumcision, regardless of his moral condition, for acceptance with God; also, in order to convince him of his need of the Gospel. This is more fully set forth in the next chapter.

Is there an example here for Christians in dealing with sectarians? There is. We may accomplish more by following Paul's example in this chapter than by adoption of the most ingenious methods of human reasoning.

But why did Paul address the un-Christian Jew directly in a letter that was directly addressed to "the saints" at Rome who were chiefly, if not wholly, Gentiles? We are not informed by the apostle, yet we can understand the advantage of such a style of address. The "saints" at Rome could

copy and quote Paul's exact words against the un-Christian Jew, and they could, thereby, avoid the liability to make mistakes in using his arguments. Besides, every Jew who could be induced to read Paul's letter to the saints at Rome might feel that Paul was addressing him.

What classes of persons most closely resemble the Jews whom Paul addressed in this letter? The religious sectarians of so-called Christendom resemble them. But who are those sectarians? All religious persons who are not willing to be told of their errors in doctrine or practice, but especially in doctrine. Are any professed disciples unwilling to be told of their errors? Yes. Many who profess to be disciples of Christ become offended whenever they are told of their errors, and all such may be justly designated as "sectarians" because they have restricted themselves in regard to learning truth, and making improvements in their religious life. All such are sectarians. They have, as a matter of choice, decided upon certain methods and measures, by which they will endeavor to serve the Lord, regardless of the oracles of God. They have chosen to follow their own thoughts and ways in regard to worship and work, rather than the Lord's ways, and, with few exceptions, they refuse to be reproved, or they become angry at their reprovers. They illustrate Proverbs 15:10, and, with few exceptions they will, finally, realize what that proverb means in all of its bearings. Paul's method in addressing the un-Christian Jews, whom he exposed in his letter to the Romans, is the best that has been made known to disarm sectarians since Jesus was on earth in person. But as Jesus and Paul both failed to convince many, who were bitter in their sectism as professed Jews, we should not now be discouraged by reason of our many failures to convince sectarians who profess to be Christians.

CHAPTER III

"What saith the Scripture," as here recorded? A continuance of Paul's arraignment of the un-Christian Jew is first set before us, and then an arraignment of both Jews and Gentiles, as equally guilty, and condemnable, before God. This is followed by the declaration that mankind cannot be justified by the deeds of the law—the Jewish law—and then the doctrine of justification by the "grace" of God, and "by faith, without the deeds of the law." The chapter is ended with a declaration concerning God's impartiality in the Gospel toward both Jews and Gentiles, followed by the declaration that the law is established through faith.

What is set forth in the first of this chapter? The advantage which the Jew had, by reason of the fact that to him were given “the oracles of God,” which consisted of God's written revelation to mankind concerning his will, is first set forth. Next we find the information given that God should be regarded as true, even if in doing so we need to regard every man as a “liar.”

What effect should such information have on all Bible readers? It should cause them to tremble at the thought of trying to modify inspired scripture to suit human notions, or adjust the Gospel to the waywardness of mankind. But regardless of the information here given by the Apostle Paul multitudes are disposed to change the Gospel so that it will not condemn any good religious people. Paul says, “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” This means that God's word should be accepted as strictly correct, even if it condemns the entire world of mankind.

What is set forth in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th verses of this chapter? Paul's exposure of the contemptible reasoning of the unrighteous Jews whom he addressed, is here set forth. Those Jews seemed disposed to apologize for their unrighteousness because God's judgments against them caused the divine righteousness to be made known, and to be commended. Such reasoning was like that of a drunkard who would apologize for his drunkenness because, in contrast with it, the sobriety of other men is commended.

But why did Paul class himself with such Jews, as if he was equally guilty with them? This was the severest, and, therefore, the most delicate phase of his reasoning with them, and it became less offensive when he spoke of himself as if he was numbered with them. At least, the judicious speaker and writer will often adopt this method of speech in order to avoid giving offense.

Paul said that it was slanderous to charge him with teaching, “Let us do evil that good may come.” But what may we say of many who now profess to be Christians? They seem to glory in doing evil that good may come. That is to say, they work with much diligence in advocating devices which they know will divide the Church of the New Testament, and, if we may believe their words, they do this in order “that good may come.” But if we should judge such professors by their actions what would be our conclusion? They are moved by love of popularity rather than by a love of God and Christ and humanity, and a love of

doing good—this would be our conclusion. They have deceived themselves with the idea of doing good, but show that their chief desire is to be popular. But what may we conclude concerning the good that is done, contrary to the divine will, especially by those who have opportunity to know that will? The good thus done may be accepted, or it may be rejected, yet those who accomplish good by doing evil will certainly be condemned. The Old Testament abounds with evidence on this subject, and Paul's reasoning in the scriptures before us is to the same effect.

What may we say of the 9th verse? It states one of the conclusions which Paul had in view when he began, in the letter we are considering, to address the un-Christian Jew. The first of those conclusions was, that the unrighteous Jew, who knew enough to condemn the Gentile for his unrighteousness, was “inexcusable,” and self-condemned, because he did the same things that he condemned in the Gentile. The next conclusion was that the unrighteous Jew was unreasonable when he apologized for himself because his unrighteousness caused God's righteousness to become manifest. The third conclusion, which Paul wished to impress, is that the Jews are not any better than the Gentiles, and that “they are all under sin.” Then, we learn by considering the latter part of this chapter that the fourth conclusion which Paul wished to impress was that neither Jew nor Gentile could be justified by the Jewish law, but that both might be justified by the favor of God on the divine side, and then, on the human side, by such faith as those had who became believers in Christ.

What should we say to those who refer to the 10th verse of this chapter, and declare that there is not a righteous person now on earth? We should refer them to the 14th and 53rd divisions of the Book of Psalms, and thereby show them that Paul copied from certain declarations concerning the “workers of iniquity” who were contrasted with God's “people.” See Psalm 14:4, also 53:4. Those declarations Paul applied to the un-Christian Jew, and unbelieving Gentile, but never applied them to the “saints” at Rome, nor to any others who were obedient to the divine will. But he applied them to those of whom he could say, “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” See 18th verse.

What is indicated by the expression “every mouth may be stopped,” as recorded in the 19th verse? The indication is that when the Jews, who made higher pretensions than the Gentiles, were put to silence in regard to their pretensions,

then “all the world,” as consisting of Jews and Gentiles, would “become guilty before God,” because they could not plead any justification before him.

Why was it necessary for Paul to crowd the Jew with declarations concerning his guiltiness before God, and endeavor to show him that he could not be justified by the law that had been given through Moses? The Jew was full of religious conceit because he regarded himself as better than the Gentile, and, for that reason, it was necessary for Paul to be explicit in declaring his guilt, and even to declare that he could not be justified by the law, so that he might be willing to accept the justification offered in the Gospel.

Are there any persons who now resemble the Jews in the particulars just mentioned? Yes, all religious sectarians resemble them, for they regard themselves as better than worldlings, and think they can be saved by such religion as is taught in their denominational creeds. All such need to be addressed with the utmost caution, even as Paul addressed the Jew in the preceding chapter, and yet need to be addressed as plainly as Paul addressed the Jew in the chapter we are now considering. Religious prejudice, or prepossession, may be justly designated religious conceit, and it always hinders the advance of truth more than common worldliness. A religious devil is more difficult to dislodge than is an irreligious devil. The irreligious devil soon admits that he is a bad fellow, but the religious devil insists that he is respectable.

What is meant by the word “propitiation,” as found in the 25th verse? The word “satisfaction” expresses the idea more plainly, and the doctrine here declared is that God set forth Christ Jesus to be a satisfaction for our sins, when we believe in the satisfaction which he made by his death in our behalf, and obey him.

What may we learn by considering the 26th verse? The doctrine therein set forth is that the death of Christ was necessary in order that God might be just when he pardons the sins of those who believe in Christ. Man had sinned, and was under condemnation from which he could not deliver himself, and which would have remained if God had not appointed Jesus Christ to be a substitute for him. But by reason of Jesus, as the substitute that God gave in man's behalf, it became possible for God to be just, and yet the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

Is there any difference between the expressions “by faith”

and “through faith,” as found in the 30th verse? There is not, as far as effect is concerned. Jews and Gentiles were required, and still are required, to obey the same Gospel in order to be saved.

How was the Jewish law established “through faith,” as declared in the last verse of this chapter? In Hebrews 10: I Paul declares that the law has “a shadow of good things to come.” This being true the conclusion is unavoidable that when we accept those “good things” we establish the “shadow” as being correct as a shadow. In view of this Paul would declare, that “we establish the law,” “through faith.”

CHAPTER IV

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed concerning the faith of Abraham, who was the father of the Jewish nation according to the flesh, also that by reason of his faith he becomes the father of both Jews and Gentiles who follow his example of faith.

What is the bearing of Paul's reasoning concerning faith and works in the first of this chapter? Its bearing is, that as Abraham was not justified by works of merit so the Jews whom Paul addressed could not be justified by such works. This is evident by the word “debt,” as recorded in the 4th verse, and which is used in contrast with “grace,” or favor. Taking such reasoning of Paul, in all its bearing, this may be justly regarded as its force: After having shown that the Jew was not any better than the Gentile, was under sin, could not be justified by the law, but needed to seek justification by faith in Christ—after all this he supposed that the Jew would refer to Abraham, and try to justify himself on the basis that Abraham was justified, and, thus, avoid seeking justification by faith. Therefore, Paul referred to Abraham and showed that he was justified by faith before the law was given, and even before he was circumcised, also that he received circumcision as a sign of the faith which he had while he was uncircumcised. In showing all this he confuted the Jew in a two-fold sense; first, by showing that Abraham was justified by faith, and second, that he was justified without the deeds of the Jewish law. Then he showed that Abraham became the father of all the faithful regardless of circumcision.

Is Paul's method of reasoning in the first of this chapter such that it can be adopted by Christians in their efforts to convince sectarians? It is. In their efforts to ignore water

baptism in its relation to the salvation of alien sinners they often refer to good persons who have lived and died without baptism, especially without immersion. When they do this we should inform them that the Savior and his Apostles—the best persons who ever lived on earth—were baptized with water baptism, and never intimated that sinners could be saved without it. On the contrary, the Savior said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” By presenting such facts we can confute those who endeavor to ignore water baptism, and in so doing plead that certain good persons were saved without it.

Is the reasoning of Paul against justification by works in opposition to that which we find in the latter part of the 2nd chapter of the epistle of James? It is not. Paul here wrote concerning works of merit, such as would bring God in “debt” to man, while James wrote of works of obedience, such as God commanded when he spoke to Abraham and told him to offer up his son Isaac as a burnt-offering.

Is there any church in so-called Christendom which advocates doing works of merit? There is. The Roman Catholic church commands works above those that are divinely commanded, and nearly all Protestant denominations do the same. They adopt means and measures, plans and arrangements both in worship and work, which the Lord never ordained. All conformity to those things is not a work of obedience, but is, by implication, a work of merit. Those who do them seem to suppose that they can please God by doing what he has never authorized, and, thereby, bring him under obligation, by reason of the good they do, to receive what he has not required.

What is set forth in the 11th and 12th verses? The fact is here set forth, that Abraham, by his faith, before he was circumcised, became, in God's purpose, the father of two Israels—Israel according to the flesh, and Israel according to the Spirit. The former Israel was, in the divine purpose, to consist of the Jewish nation, while the latter Israel was, in the divine purpose, to consist of all Christians whether Jews or Gentiles. In view of all this, what may we say of Abraham? He was the greatest man, as a father, which the Bible reveals among men. What was the secret of his greatness? His faith, and God's promises. And why did God make him the promises which made him the greatest of fathers? His unfaltering faith in all that God said to him, and faithful obedience to all that God commanded him

this is the reason that God promised to him that he should be the father of two Israels.

What is indicated in the 14th verse? The difference between the divine promise to Abraham, and the law given through Moses, is indicated. The promise was made first, and the law which came afterward could not annul it, nor set it aside. But what is meant by the “promise” here mentioned? The 13th verse of this chapter, taken in connection with Galatians 3:16, 17, informs us that the word “promise” in the verse now under consideration referred to Christ, and through Christ to all the faithful.

What may we learn by considering the 15th verse? We may learn that the severe punishments threatened by the law are here declared to have worked “wrath.” They certainly indicated that wrath should be exercised. We may also learn that God does not hold mankind accountable beyond the law that he has given to them. What should we say to those who use this passage as evidence that they may make additions to the worship and work of the New Testament Church? We should say to them that Christ has given a law which he declares is “complete” for his Church. See Colossians 2:10; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:3. Therefore, whoever speaks, or acts, to the contrary of 'that which Christ says is “complete” and which will “perfect the man of God,” and by which he “has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness”—whoever thus speaks, or acts, is a heretic, if not an infidel, in regard to this question. Christ has given us his “perfect law of liberty,” but this does not give to any one the liberty to add to his Word, nor to take from it, in any measure nor degree. Those who venture to do anything of that kind plainly show that they are not satisfied with the law which Christ has given in regard to the worship and work of his Church.

And what may we learn by considering the 16th and 17th verses? The 16th assured the un-Christian Jew, whom Paul was still addressing, that “the promise” to Abraham with all its blessings, including heirship, was by reason of Abraham's faith, in order that it might be made sure to all the faithful regardless of the Jewish law. Then the 17th verse assured the Jew that God's promise to Abraham that he had made him “a father of many nations” was made in view of the future; that is, God had made him thus in his own purpose.

What is recorded in the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st verses? A record is here given of Abraham's faith in God's promise

of Isaac, and of God's estimate of his faith. He believed that which the Lord said to him, regardless of appearances, and his faith was counted, or credited, to him "for righteousness," or right-doing. He was sure that God's promise could not fail, though all earthly prospects were against its fulfillment. And what should we learn by considering the record here given of such faith? We should learn to trust God in all his promises to us without faltering.

Why was a record of Abraham's faith made? The last part of this chapter informs us that it was made for our sakes as well as for the sake of Abraham. This indicates that we should learn through the faith of Abraham to believe God in all that he commands, promises, threatens, says, without faltering, and without a doubt. Abraham, above all others, is the exemplar of faith among Old Testament worthies. He never staggered, nor faltered, nor hesitated, when God spoke to him.

CHAPTER V

What is offered to Bible readers in this chapter? We have offered to us Paul's conclusion concerning the basis of the justification of those who are Christians, and a statement of the results of their justification, followed by a statement of their advantages as justified beings. Then we have offered to us certain statements concerning Christ as the manifestation, above all others, of God's love for mankind, and of benefits which we have by reason of Christ. A comparison and contrast between Adam and Christ we find in the latter part of the chapter, followed by the advantages of the divine grace, or favor, over the advantages of the Jewish law.

What does the Greek word translated "justified" mean, as it is here used? It means "regarded as innocent, treated as innocent, and declared to be innocent." This being true, all those who are justified before God he regards as innocent of their past offenses, he treats them as innocent, and he declares them to be innocent. As a result they "have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

What may we say of the 4th verse of this chapter? We may say that a later translation of it deviates from that which we have in the Common Version, and represents Paul as saying, that patience works approbation, or an approved character. This deviation from the Common Version is justified by the Greek text of this verse, and is more strictly correct than the idea that patience works "experience,"

for impatience likewise works “experience,” though of another kind from that which patience works.

And what may we safely say of the 5th verse? We may safely say that it means what it declares, and that we should be satisfied with its meaning without trying to modify it to suit any humanly arranged notions. This scripture clearly implies that an impartation of the Holy Spirit is given to Christians, and clearly declares that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by that impartation of the Spirit. If the expression “shed abroad” means what it says, then the expression “given unto us” means what it says. The same reasoning which will explain away one of these expressions will explain away the other.

What is intimated in the 7th verse? The difference between a “righteous man” and a “good man” is intimated, also that a good man has a stronger hold on the hearts of his fellow mortals than a man has who is only righteous. What is the chief difference between a man who is only “righteous,” and one who is “good”? All good men are righteous; that is, they are just, or correct, if they are really good, or worthy of being called “good.” But a man may be “righteous,” or correct in business, without being “good.” That is to say, a man may be very strict in business, and, in that sense, may be righteous, but he may be destitute of that excellence called “goodness.”

What is the force of the 8th verse? It declares that God gave Christ to die for mankind when they were sinners, and, therefore, when they were neither “good” nor “righteous.” By so doing he certainly “commendeth his love toward us.”

What is the bearing of the declaration, “we shall be saved by his life,” as recorded in the last of the 10th verse? Its bearing is indicated in John 14:19. In the last part of that scripture the Savior says, “Because I live ye shall live also.” We are saved by the life that he lived before he was crucified, but especially by his life that he now lives. See Hebrews 7:25.

What does the word “atonement” mean, as found in the 11th verse? The Greek word here translated “atonement” means “an exchange; reconciliation, restoration to favor.” In view of this we may safely say that the death of Christ's body was given in “exchange” for our everlasting death, and by his death we are, in one respect, “restored” to the divine favor, and thus are “reconciled,” or in condition to be reconciled.

Is there any conflict between the 1st verse and the 9th of this chapter? No. The 1st verse refers to the human side, while the 9th refers to the divine side of man's redemption. On the human side we are "justified by faith" in Christ, and on the divine side we are "justified by his blood." But this is not all. In chapter 3:24 we learn that Paul, in writing concerning God, declared that we are "justified freely by his grace." Such justification, or means of justification, pertained to the divine side. The same is true of all else that the Lord has done in behalf of man's salvation. But that which man is required to do in order to be saved pertains to the human side of salvation.

What do we find in the 12th verse, and onward to the close of this chapter? We find mention made of Adam's sin, and of its results, also of the death of Christ, and of its results. In that which is here mentioned we find that the loss which mankind suffered through Adam they have gained through Christ, likewise that through obedience to Christ they may gain much more than they lost through Adam. That is to say, through Adam's sin they lost life and must die, but through Christ's righteousness they will be raised from the dead. Besides, mankind were condemned by reason of one offense, but they may, through obedience to Christ, be saved from many offenses. Finally, through Adam's sin mankind lost their home in an earthly paradise, but through obedience to Christ they may obtain a home in a heavenly paradise.

What may we say of the 14th verse of this chapter? It indicates that death was not only introduced by reason of Adam's transgression, but was continued by reason of it, for Paul declares that death "reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude [likeness] of Adam's transgression." Does this refer to infants and idiots as a separate class? No. They had not sinned by any kind of transgression. The connection shows that Paul was endeavoring to show that death was introduced by one transgression of one man, and was continued by reason of that one man's one transgression.

What is the bearing of the 20th verse? This verse declares that the Jewish law was introduced that the offenses which mankind were committing might be made known. That law was a standard by which to measure man, and to show wherein he transgressed, and wherein he sinned by omission. Finally, this verse declares that God's grace was more abundant than man's sin).

CHAPTER VI

What is set before Bible readers in this chapter? This chapter sets forth obedience to the Gospel and the benefits of such obedience, in connection with which we find an exhortation to Christians that they should live so as to maintain those benefits.

Why did Paul write the questions which we find in the 1st verse of this chapter? In the last part of the preceding chapter we learn that Paul declared that the grace of God, through Christ, was greater than the sin which Adam committed, and that this grace abounded to the forgiveness of many other sins. In view of what he had thus declared Paul seemed to suppose that some one might say, "Then let us continue to sin, for the more sin, the more grace." This kind of reasoning among the unrighteous Jews he exposed in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th verses of the 3rd chapter of this letter, and he proposed to anticipate it in the beginning of this chapter, also to expose it before it could be offered.

What did Paul mean by the expression "dead to sin" in the 2nd verse? His meaning is evident from the last part of this verse, for the expression "dead to sin" is here used in contrast with "live any longer therein." This indicates that to be "dead to sin" means the opposite of living in sin, and, therefore, means to cease the practice of sin.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd and 4th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul here intimated concerning the retrospective view of baptism, indicated the state or condition of those who are baptized, and explicitly declared the prospective view of baptism. That is to say, in view of the death to sin mentioned in the 2nd verse Paul intimated concerning "the remission of sins" offered to those who are baptized. See Acts 2:38. Then he incidentally mentioned that those who obey Christ "are buried with him by baptism," and, finally, declared that the prospective view of baptism is "newness of life." What is the force of the expressions "baptized into his death," and "baptized into death," as found in the verses now under consideration? The most general meaning of the Greek word here translated "baptized" is "overwhelm." This is its essential meaning, and all else that is given as a definition of that word is incidental. The Greek word which is changed in its termination, and is given to us in English as "baptism," means an overwhelming, however that overwhelming may be accomplished. This conclusion is justified by the Greek and

English dictionaries which define that word, and this conclusion is demanded by the usage of that word both in Greek literature and in the New Testament. For instance, Greek literature makes mention of a district of country as “baptized” when it was inundated, or overflowed with water, and the Greek version of the Old Testament declares that Nebuchadnezzar's body was “baptized with the dew of heaven.” See Daniel 4:25, 33. Besides, the New Testament is to the same effect. In Mark 10:38, 39, the Savior spoke of his death, and of the death of his Apostles, as a “baptism,” and in Acts 1:5 he described the descent of the Holy Spirit, which he promised should come upon his chosen ones, by the word “baptized.” In all these instances, and many others that might be mentioned, the idea of dipping does not occur, but the idea of overwhelming prevails. But when anything is dipped in water or any other liquid, so that it is covered, then an overwhelming is accomplished. This being true, the declaration may be safely made that the essential, or generic, meaning of the Greek word “baptize” is to overwhelm, and that all else said in defining it is specific, or incidental.

Is there anything else in the expression “baptized into his death” which we ought to consider? Yes. As Christ was overwhelmed by his sufferings when he died, so we must be overwhelmed by the waters when we are baptized, for his death was designated, a “baptism.” Here is positive evidence against all sprinkling, and such pouring, of water, as is commonly practiced by certain religionists, for baptism. The baptism here spoken of was designated by the word “buried,” and those who submitted to it were declared to have been “baptized into his death,” and “into death.” In view of this, we may safely say that any performance or ceremony less than a complete immersion, or overwhelming, is not the baptism here referred to. Besides, as Christ was not baptized by his sufferings till he was overwhelmed with them so we are not baptized with water till we are overwhelmed with it. Therefore, all sprinkling, or pouring, of water for baptism is deceptive, and should, on that account, be forever rejected and denounced.

What should we say to those who endeavor to break the force of the expression “by baptism,” in the 4th verse, by declaring that the word “by” refers to instrumentality, or agent, as when we read that Alexander was buried by his generals? We should refer them to Colossians 2:12, where we find the expression “buried with him in baptism,” and thereby show that the real meaning of the expression “by baptism” is that

by obedience in baptism we are brought into an overwhelmed condition, even as Jesus was brought into such condition when he died.

And what should we say to those who teach that not obedient believers but the “old man” of sin is the one that is buried by baptism? We should say that whoever or whatever is buried is “raised” to “walk in newness of life,” and if the “old man” is buried, then when he will be raised to “walk in newness of life” our last state may be worse than the first. Next we should show that the words “we” and “us,” as used in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th verses, are sufficient to show that Paul referred to obedient believers when he used those words, and the word “our” in the 6th verse.

Is there anything in the scriptures we have been considering that is against trine-immersion as a doctrine? There is this against that doctrine:

1. Jesus Christ died but once, was buried but once, and was raised but once.

2. When we are “baptized into Jesus Christ” we are “baptized into his death,” and as this is true, we may ask, What is the meaning of baptism into the name of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, as neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit died for us?

These considerations show that trine-immersion is a human speculation, contrary to scripture, and confusing to mankind. Its advocates depend more on human inference than on divine testimony in regard to that subject.

What is indicated by the 6th verse? This verse indicates that 4 (our old man,” which cannot mean anything but the mind of the flesh, and which consists of our earthward inclinations, is so entirely brought under control, when we become Christians, that it is said to be “crucified” with Christ, and the end in view is “that the body of sin,” or the disposition to sin, “might be destroyed,” so “that henceforth we should not serve sin.” This is followed by the declaration that “he that is dead [dead to sin] is freed from sin.”

What may we learn by giving attention to the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th verses? We may learn that the separation from sin which is made by obedience to the Gospel is intended to be as positive and radical as the separation of Christ from this life when he died on the cross. The word “dead” is used in regard to the separation made in each instance, and the death of Jesus on the cross is used as an illustration of our death to sin when we turn from its practice.

And what may we learn by giving attention to the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? We may learn that after Paul had declared the separation from sin which obedience to the Gospel had made, then, on the basis of that separation, he exhorted Christians not to let sin “reign” in their bodies, and not to “yield” their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. That is to say, he exhorted them neither to let sin “reign” in their bodies, nor to let it have any opportunity to “reign” there.

What is suggested by the 14th and 15th verses? The danger of comfort and encouragement being misunderstood is suggested. Paul encouraged those whom he addressed, but, at once, gave to them a precaution, so as to prevent them from misunderstanding him, and from making an improper use of that which he wrote. Then, in the 16th verse, he informed them that by obedience they became “servants,” whether their obedience was in the right or wrong direction. In view of this, what may we say to those who refuse to become Christians because they wish to be free, and do not intend to be servants to any one? We may say to them that if they do not obey Christ they will certainly be servants of Satan, for if they do not obey righteousness they will be servants of unrighteousness. Therefore they cannot escape service altogether.

What is set before Bible readers in the 17th and 18th verses? That God should be “thanked” that though the Christians at Rome had been “servants of sin,” yet they had obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine which was delivered to them, and that they were then “made free from sin,” and “became the servants of righteousness.” What was that “form of doctrine”? In one sense it must have been the entire list of Gospel requirements, including faith, repentance, confession, and baptism; and, in another sense, it was baptism, which has a form, or mold, of doctrine in the burial and resurrection which it requires.

May these verses, now under examination, be regarded as declarations concerning the evidence of pardon? They may be so regarded. They declare that obedient believers are made free from sin, and become “servants of righteousness” when they “obey from the heart” that form of doctrine which is delivered in the Gospel. Therefore, these verses declare the very time and condition when sins are forgiven, or pardon is bestowed. This should settle the question of evidence of pardon with all Bible readers. That evidence is found in the divine declaration set forth in the 18th verse of

this chapter, and not on some human inference or feeling. The Lord says we are free from gin when we have obeyed the form of doctrine delivered in his Word, and whoever says that we are freed from sin before such obedience certainly says that which is not true.

What is indicated in the 19th verse? The necessity of plain speech in order to be understood, is here indicated, and this explains much accommodative language that is found in the Bible. The Lord has spoken to mankind “after the manner of men” in order to bring the greatness of divine truth down to the weakness of the human understanding. This explains the record concerning the sun and moon standing still, as found in Joshua 10:12, 13. That record is accommodative, even as are the ordinary remarks that are made concerning the sun and moon rising and going down. And what may we say of those who reject the Bible because of its accommodative speech? We may say that professing themselves to be wise they become fools.

What else do we find in the 19th verse of this chapter? We find an exhortation for Christians to yield their members to do right, even as they formerly yielded them to do wrong. Is this exhortation still of importance? It is. There are many who were active servants of sin while in the service of Satan, but who are very inactive servants of God after they obey the Gospel.

What is indicated in the 20th verse? The indication is that those persons are self-deceived who suppose that they can be “servants of sin,” and yet be righteous in certain respects so as to be, in some measure, acceptable to God. Paul here informs us that those who are “the servants of sin” are “free from righteousness.”

And what may we say of the 21st verse? It implies that the outworkings of a wrong life may be called “fruit,” and this implies that the outworking of a right life may be called “fruit.” Galatians 5:22 is in harmony with that which has just been stated. The last part of this 21st verse declares that “the end” of the unrighteous life which the “saints” at Rome had lived, before their conversion to Christ, “is death.”

And what of the 22nd verse? It declares the condition of the saints at Rome in their deliverance from sin, and service to God, also that they had their “fruit unto holiness,” and that they should have in the end “everlasting life.” Such is the blessed condition, and such is the blessed prospect, of all Christians.

What is declared in the last verse of this chapter? The “wages of sin” and the “gift of God” we find here declared. The former is declared to be “death” and the latter is declared to be “eternal life.” In what sense may “the wages of sin” be declared to be “death”? In every sense in which the word “death” is applied in the Bible to sin and its results. Adam and Eve died to righteousness the very instant that they sinned against God, and they became subject to the death of the body when they were separated from the tree of life by reason of their sin. Besides, all mankind became subject to the death of the body by reason of the sin which our first parents committed. Finally, those who remain in sin will, at last, suffer what is designated “the second death.” See Revelation 20:6, 14. Does “the second death” mean annihilation, or extinction of being? No. Revelation 22:11 declares that the “unjust” and the “filthy” shall “be” or exist even as the “righteous” and the “holy” shall “be” or exist. Not only so, but that verse declares that they shall “be” as characters. This excludes the idea that they shall cease to “be,” or shall be blotted out of all existence.

Does the declaration in the last part of this verse discard the necessity for obedience? No. Eternal life is “the gift of God,” but it is a conditional gift. See Hebrews 5:8, 9; Revelation 22:14.

CHAPTER VII

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are informed, first of all, that Paul again addressed himself to Jews, and introduced the Jewish law concerning a fleshly marriage, in order to illustrate the marriage of believers to Christ when they obey him, and the purpose of such marriage. Next we are informed concerning the sinful condition of the Jews, by reason of their fleshly inclinations, before the law was given to them, and after it was given, throughout the period that passed before the gospel of Christ was made known to them. This implies that the un-Christian Jew is still in the same sinful condition because he seeks to be justified by the law, which he cannot keep perfectly, and which constantly condemns him.

Do the statements which Paul here makes use of in regard to the marriage relation discard Matthew 19:9 on that subject? No. The scriptures which pertain to that subject, or any other, should all be considered. We should not take one of them, nor more than one, to the exclusion of any

other that bears on the same subject. On the contrary, we should strive to take all that the Sacred Text declares on every subject. When we do this on the subject of marriage and divorce it will be as clear as any other subject revealed in the Sacred Text. God does not require a man to live with an adulterous woman, nor a woman to live with an adulterous man. If either a husband or a wife has violated the marriage vow, and repents, then the other should forgive, even as God forgave the Jews when they repented after having committed spiritual adultery by going after heathen gods.

What is indicated in the 4th verse of this chapter? The fact that Christians are “married” to Christ is here indicated, also that they “should bring forth fruit unto God.” The kind of “fruit” which they should bring forth is mentioned in Galatians 5:22, 23.

But when are persons “married to Christ”? We are compelled to conclude that the marriage is consummated when the marriage ceremony is pronounced, and that is when persons are baptized into Christ. It is then that obedient believers take Christ to be their only lawful head and guide. But what shall we say of that which Revelation 19:7 declares on this subject? That scripture informs us of the time when the bride—the Church—will have “made herself ready,” and that time will not come till the Church will have completed her list of conversions. Those who become members of the Church—the bride—are individually married to Christ when they obey the Gospel, and the Church will be collectively presented to Christ as his bride, at the end of the Gospel Age, when the individual members of the Church will all have been perfected and brought together. Then, and not till then, will the bride have “made herself ready.” With this discrimination before our minds the scriptures which bear on this subject all appear to be harmonious.

Why did Paul class himself with the Jews before the law was given? He had a right to do so because he was a member of the Jewish nation, even as he had a right to class himself with the saints who will be alive when Jesus will come again. See 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Besides, Paul's reasoning concerning the sinful condition of the Jews, when they were known as the children of Israel before the law was given, and even after it was given, and onward till the Gospel was given, became less offensive when he classed himself with the kind of sinners which he wished the Jews, whom he addressed, to regard themselves.

What is the bearing of the 5th verse of this chapter? The expression “in the flesh” must mean under the control of the flesh, and the expression “motions of sin” must mean passions which lead to sin, because those expressions cannot mean anything else if we consider their connection and application. Moreover, the expression “which were by the law” must mean, by the law revealed, for they were not produced nor created by the law, because they belonged to the Jews, as they do to all mankind, by nature. With these unavoidable conclusions before our minds we may read the verse under consideration after this manner: “When we were under the influence of the flesh, the passions which lead to sins, which were by the law revealed, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” Having set forth the foregoing ideas Paul added this: “But now being delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the airiness of the letter.” That is to say, “ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ” which was crucified to make an end of the Jewish law and to introduce the law of the Spirit—the Gospel—that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the airiness of the letter. The word “letter” in this connection referred to the law given through Moses, while the word “spirit” referred to the Gospel. See 2 Corinthians 3:6.

What is the bearing of the 7th verse of this chapter? Because he had stated that the sinful outworkings of the human passion were revealed by the law given through Moses, Paul seemed to have inferred, or as an inspired man he knew, that the Jews whom he addressed might conclude that the law was sinful in itself. To prevent such a conclusion from being drawn he wrote this verse, and showed that the law was only the standard by which sin was revealed, but was not in itself sinful. The 8th verse bears in the same direction. “Sin,” “the passions of sin,” or the passions which clamor for gratification, and lead to sin, came in conflict with the commandment of the law in many particulars, and “wrought,” or revealed, “all manner of concupiscence,” or lawlessness. “For without the law sin was dead”; that is, it was not revealed, and thus not known.

With all this before our minds we are prepared to understand the 9th verse, which is a remarkable declaration in brevity and comprehensiveness; Paul said, “For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived and I died.” This declaration Paul wrote as a conclusion from that which he had previously stated. And hav-

ing understood what he had previously stated we see that his conclusion is clearly this: The Israelite was gratifying his flesh, as he desired, before the law was given, and did not feel condemned, and, as a result, he was “alive,” or uncondemned; but when the law was given, and revealed that he was going too far in gratifying his flesh, then he felt condemned, and in that sense he “died.” But all this the Apostle Paul set forth in this brief and comprehensive sentence: “For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived and I died.” Then he added, “And the commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death.” Thus it was in every case when a man was condemned for sin by the Jewish law, especially when he was condemned to die by being stoned to death. But this is not all. Paul further explained by saying, “For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” That is to say, the passions which lead to sin often led the Jew to think he could evade the commandment, and thus deceived him, and brought him under condemnation. The covetousness of Achan and of David serve as an illustration of this. See Joshua 7th chapter and 2 Samuel 11th and 12th chapters. The former coveted wealth, and the latter another man's wife. The former was stoned to death, and the latter deserved to die.

What may we say of the 12th verse? Having shown that the law was not sinful in itself, but was a standard by which to reveal sin, Paul declared, “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”

But at this juncture Paul seemed to have thought of a criticism that a critical Jew might offer to this effect: “Well, after all that you have said, a good and holy and just law made death.” Therefore he wrote the 13th verse, and showed that sin, or the passions which lead to sin, were to blame for the “death” which resulted, and not the standard which revealed the outworkings of those passions as sinful. Having done this he said, “For I know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.” Such, at least, was the condition of the Jew under the law, for his passions were such that he often violated the law, and was thereby condemned so that Paul described him as “sold under sin.”

Why did Paul reason so closely, critically, and delicately, on this subject? He reasoned thus because he needed to convince the un-Christian Jew that the law wherein he trusted condemned him, and yet he needed to prevent such Jew from concluding that the law which condemned him was to

blame for the condemnation which it inflicted. He also reasoned thus in order to convince the un-Christian Jew that he needed something better than the law to justify him, and, thereby, prepare him to believe in Christ and obey the Gospel. In order to accomplish these important ends Paul also needed to portray the strength and deception of human passions. Therefore, he proceeded to say, "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; what I hate that I do." Instead of the word "allow" let us here use the word "endorse," which is justified by the Greek text, and demanded by the context. Then we may read, "For that which I do I endorse not," or I sanction not, or I do not view with favor. And, as an illustration of such power of sin as is here described, take the case of a man who says that the use of tobacco is a filthy habit, yet who continues to use it; and take the case of a drunkard who denounces all intoxicants, and yet gets drunk every opportunity that he has; and the case of an opium fiend who will curse his condition, yet will continue in it. With such cases, or instances, before our minds we can understand all that Paul declared from the beginning of the 15th verse to the close of the chapter. In other words, Paul declared that the best that he, as a representative of the Jews, could do was to assent in mind to the correctness of the law of God as set forth in the Jewish law, yet go on and violate that law, in many respects, whereby he might say of himself that in his flesh he was serving "the law of sin." Peter's declaration in Acts 15:10 is to the same effect.

How many laws does Paul mention in the last of this chapter? He mentions three,— "the law in my members," "the law of my mind," "the law of God." This last law revealed sin in the members of the fleshly body, and condemned the body to death. By the law of his "mind," consisting of his reason and moral sentiments, Paul declared that he, as a Jew, could approve "the law of God," as found in the law given through Moses, but by the law in his members, consisting of his passions, he was prevented from rendering perfect obedience to the law of God.

What, then, did Paul mean when he declared that he was personally "blameless" as "touching the righteousness which is in the law"? See Philippians 3:6. In thus writing concerning himself Paul either regarded himself as an exception to the average Jew, as his history informs us that he was, or he was writing concerning righteousness of the law in a manward direction. Besides, in Luke 1:5, 6 we read of a man and his wife who, in their old age, at least, were ex-

ceptions, as they walked “in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” The same was probably true of others, but not true of a majority of the Jews, nor was it true of the average Jew, especially during that period in his life when his passions were in their strength and fierceness. His reason and moral sentiments were not sufficient to control his passions, nor was the law given through Moses sufficient. Therefore Paul wrote in behalf of the Jew, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” This was the strong and important impression which he had been endeavoring to make on the un-Christian Jew, and having stated it he immediately wrote, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” This is evidently a rhetorical sentence, and its idea is partly implied, for its full meaning must be this: “I thank God [who shall deliver me] through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

But before we leave this chapter we should inquire, Why did God make the Jew, or any one else, to be possessed of such passions as to make him a wretched man? The answer to this is found in Genesis 1:28. In order to accomplish the end mentioned in this verse it was necessary that man should have much passion and energy. Those who lack in these particulars do not accomplish much in this world. Jehovah did not make a mistake in the temperament he gave to man, but man has made a mistake in using it. The body, with all its passions, is a good servant, but a bad master, even as fire, and water and wind, and all other elements in nature, are good servants, but are bad masters. Man has made his fatal mistake in suffering his body, which was intended to be the servant of his mind, to become the master of his mind. That is to say, he has so gratified and cultivated his baser passions, and has so neglected to train his brain, and exercise his reason and moral sentiments, that he has degenerated. As a result his body has brought his mind in subjection, and his mind is encased in a body which leads to death. In view of this Paul exclaimed, “O wretched man that I am!” and inquired, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” In other words, Who shall enable me to overcome this body, and, thereby, prevent it from leading me to death? In the next verse Paul indicated that God will deliver him through Christ, and in 1 Corinthians 9:27 he wrote thus: “But I keep under my body [keep my body under], and bring it into subjection.” In thus writing concerning himself he clearly implied that through Christ he had accomplished self-control which the un-Christian Jew could not, generally, accomplish by means of the Jewish law, To this

we may add that through Christ Paul had accomplished what mankind, generally, can only accomplish by a wholehearted acceptance of the gospel of Christ, and a wholehearted continuance therein.

CHAPTER VIII

What may we learn by considering this chapter of Paul's writings? We may learn concerning the supremacy which the Gospel gives to the spirit of man over the body of flesh in which it dwells. In connection with the record here given of that supremacy we find mention made of the conflict between the spirit and the flesh, also of the fact that through the Gospel the spirit of man is assisted by the Spirit of God, and enabled to overcome both the strength and the weakness of the flesh. The chapter is ended with a declaration of God's full provision for those who obey the Gospel, also of the security of those who are held by the love of Christ, and of their final triumph by reason of that love.

What may we say of the first verse of this chapter? It declares the justified and joyous condition of those who are Christians, in contrast with those who vainly tried to be justified by the Jewish law. And what may we say of the 2nd verse? It makes mention of the Gospel as "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," and declares that which it did for Paul, and all others who had obeyed it. And what of the 3rd verse? It declares that the Jewish law was not strong enough to enable those to whom it was given to overcome the strength of the flesh, but implies that God's gift of Christ in man's behalf will enable those who accept Christ to overcome the flesh.

What is the chief difference between the Jewish law and the Gospel in regard to controlling mankind? The Jewish law was written on cold tables of stone, and on cold parchments, and it never had a perfect exemplar. As a result it did not appeal directly to the affections of mankind. But the Gospel is offered to us, first, in the story of the babe of Bethlehem, and of the child Jesus, then it is offered in the man of Nazareth, and next in the man of sorrows, who became our atoning sacrifice. Besides, Jesus is presented to us in the Gospel records as the perfect man, and as the perfect exemplar of the doctrine that he taught. As a result he wins the hearts of mankind, and thereby controls them. Those who obey him do so because they have learned to love him, and to love God by reason of him. Therefore, the Gospel is writ

ton in the “hearts” of those who accept it (Hebrews 8:10), and because of this it controls them by motives which the Jewish law could not use.

What was the greatest condemnation ever offered against sin? The fact that the death of Jesus was necessary to save mankind from sin seems to have been the greatest condemnation ever offered against it. Jesus condemned sin, by his teaching, while he dwelt in the flesh, yet the fact that sin made his death necessary was the greatest condemnation of sin ever made, for the sinfulness of sin is thereby indicated more fully than by all else combined.

What does the 4th verse indicate? It indicates that the right doing which the Jewish law required is the same as that which is required by the Gospel, and this indication is in harmony with the divine record on that subject, except in regard to treatment of enemies. The Jewish law required those to whom it was given to love God with all the heart, and to love their neighbors as themselves. The Gospel requires the same, and then commands those who accept it to love their enemies by praying for them and doing them good. With this exception, as found in the command to love enemies, the law and the Gospel are the same in their two great requirements, namely, to love God with all the heart, and to love a neighbor as one's self. But in the Jewish law those requirements were to be accomplished through commands written on tables of stone, and on parchments, but in the Gospel those requirements are to be accomplished through commands exemplified in a person, and obeyed through love.

What may we say of the 5th and 6th verses? The expression “after the flesh” in the 5th means to follow the inclinations of the flesh, and thus means to be “carnally minded,” or to mind the suggestions of the flesh. On the other hand, the expression “after the Spirit” means to be “spiritually minded,” or to mind the teaching of the Holy Spirit, as that Spirit speaks through the word of truth. These verses teach that to obey the flesh leads to death, but to obey the Spirit leads to life.

What is the meaning of the 7th verse? It means what it declares, and what it implies. It declares that the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for the mind of the flesh is not in obedience to the law of God, and cannot be. This implies that the only plan by which the flesh can be kept under is that mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:27. That is to say, the word of God is not addressed to the mind of the

flesh. The Holy Spirit does not speak to man's passions, nor appetites, but speaks to the spirit that is in man's body, and orders that spirit to control the body in which it dwells. Thus it is that though the carnal mind is "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," yet the body, with all its appetites and passions, may be brought in subjection to the spirit of man when he obeys the Gospel. Such a man is said to be "spiritually minded," but a man who minds the flesh rather than the word of God is said to be "carnally minded." Therefore Paul declared that "they that are in the flesh [under its control] cannot please God." But the Christian is "not in the flesh," not under its control, but is "in the Spirit," or under the Spirit's control, yet even this is modified by the expression, "if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Then we are confronted by the bold declaration, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. "

What should we say to those who deny the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christians? We should say to them that if they will obey 1 Peter 4:11 they will cease to deny that the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians, or that an impartation of the Spirit is given to all who obey the Gospel sincerely. All that we should ask of them is to "speak as the oracles of God" speak, and they will believe and teach the truth on this subject. Let them begin with Acts 5:32, then take Romans 5:5, also the 9th verse of the chapter now before us, with all that follows to the end of the 16th, and then take Galatians 4:6, with Ephesians 1:13, 14, and all denial that obedient believers receive an impartation of the Holy Spirit when they obey the Gospel wholeheartedly will be banished.

But what should we say to those who deny that the Spirit of Christ is "sent forth" into our hearts, because they do not understand it? We should refer them to Galatians 4:4, and ask them why they do not deny that God "sent forth" his Son to be born of a woman, because they cannot understand it. But what should we say to them when they ask us what the Spirit does for us? We should answer that they may learn by reading Romans 5:5; 8:26, also Galatians 4:6. By that Spirit "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts," and that Spirit "maketh intercession for us," and by that Spirit we say "Father" when we address God in prayer, praise, thanksgiving or adoration, and feel sure that he recognizes us as his children.

What does the word "Spirit" refer to, as found in the

latter part of the 10th verse? It is there used in contrast with the body, but refers to the Holy Spirit which gives life to those who are righteous according to the Gospel.

What should we say to those who declare that the word “Spirit” means “disposition” when it refers to something that dwells in Christians? We should ask them to substitute the word “disposition” for the word “Spirit” in the 11th verse of this chapter, and see what effect it will have on them. If they seem slow to learn we should ask them whether the “disposition” that dwells in Christians will be the power that will make their bodies alive in the resurrection. But what should we say when they refer us to the 15th verse of this chapter, and say that as there was not a special “spirit of bondage” given to mankind so there is not a special “spirit of adoption” given to Christians? We should answer that the Bible does not speak of “the spirit of bondage” as an entity, or personage, but it does speak of the Holy Spirit as an entity or personage. Moreover, when a man adopts into his family a child that is not his own he can not put the spirit of adoption into that child, so that a child's affection for a parent will at once be felt by the adopted one. But the divine Father can do better than that for us. He can put “the Spirit of adoption” into us by giving to us an impartation or “measure” of his Spirit, and we thereby recognize that he is our “Father.” When Jesus obeyed the Father in baptism, then he received “the Spirit” not “by measure.” But to his adopted children the Father gives a “measure,” or an impartation of the Spirit, and they are thereby enabled to say with assurance that God is their Father. This “measure” of the Spirit, which is given to all who obey the Gospel sincerely, is not an overwhelming, and, therefore, is not a baptism, but it “helpeth our infirmities.”

What may we learn by considering the 16th and 17th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the Holy Spirit is a witness to the fact that those who obey the Gospel sincerely are “the children of God.” The spirit of each one who thus obeys is a witness, and the Holy Spirit is another that “beareth witness” to the fact that obedient believers are “children of God.” This bearing of witness by the Holy Spirit is two-fold: first, in the testimony that is written, as in chapter 6:17, 18, and, second, in the assurance whereby such believers are enabled, with confidence, to call God their “Father.”

Why do certain disciples deny the fact that any “measure”

of the Holy Spirit is now imparted to obedient believers?

They deny it for three reasons:

1. Because certain sectarians teach that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is now bestowed, and have thereby introduced much confusion into that part of the religious world known as Christendom.

2. Because the mentioned disciples do not wish to be classed with such sectarians, nor to teach anything which seems to favor their erroneous teaching on this subject.

3. Because the impartation of a “measure” of the Holy Spirit, to all obedient believers, is a mystery which they do not understand, and they forget 1 Peter 4:11.

Are the reasons just mentioned sufficient to justify any one in rejecting, or in trying to explain away, the plain testimony of the Sacred Text on this subject? They are not. We should not suffer the errors of sectarians on any subject to prevent us from accepting the fulness of the truth, nor should we refuse to admit the truth, in its fulness, on any subject, because we cannot understand it. But we should believe and advocate all that is divinely recorded regardless of the errors of others, and regardless of the real or supposed mysteries connected with it. We should not measure our acceptance of divine truth, on any subject, by sectarian errors, nor by its mysteries. We cannot understand how the spirit of any person can dwell in a human body, but we are not, on that account, justified in denying the fact of such indwelling.

What is the bearing of the last part of the 17th verse? Its bearing is indicated by 2 Timothy 2:11. Christ died as an offering for sin, and those who become Christians die to the practice of sin and then to the guilt of sin. Moreover, they are required to remain dead to sin, and to suffer all that may be necessary in order to remain dead to sin. Then the assurance is that “if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him,” and, again, “if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

What is set forth in the 18th verse, and onward to the close of the 23rd verse? Mention is made of the “sufferings” which Christians are required to endure in this world, also “the glory” which they shall have in the rest beyond. Mention is also made of the sufferings of all mankind, and even of the Apostles who “have the first fruits of the Spirit.” With this outline of these verses before our minds we can read them with clearness. The 19th verse repeats, in a measure, the idea set forth in the 18th, and gives the

additional idea of “expectation.” Then in the 20th verse the fact that man was subjected to the weakness, or “vanity,” of this life by his Creator, and not by his own will, is set forth with the idea of “hope,” of something better, appended. Next we find the assurance that man, as “the creature,” “shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.” But when will this assurance be realized? The last part of the 23rd verse assures us that it will be in the resurrection, when “the redemption of the body” will be accomplished.

What assurance have we that the word “creature,” as found in the 19th, 20th and 21st verses, certainly refers to mankind? That word, in the connection here given, cannot refer to any beings except mankind. Besides, as used in Mark 16:15 it certainly refers to mankind, and not to any' other part of creation.

What may we say of the 24th and 25th verses? The 24th declares that Christians are “saved by hope,” and then explains that “hope” refers to the future, and not to the present. The 25th verse adds the declaration that “we, with patience, wait” for that which we hope for.

But what may we learn by considering the 26th and 27th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the Spirit “helpeth our infirmities” by making “intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered,” when “we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” All Christians have such periods at some time in their life. Those who are most afflicted have many such periods. They can only turn their thoughts heavenward and groan. Another translation is “breathings which cannot be expressed.” But when they are in such condition they are not helpless. But by reason of the “measure” of the Spirit given to them, because of their obedience to the Gospel, they have an intercession that is understood. But is not Christ our intercessor? Yes. Hebrews 7:25 informs us that Christ intercedes for Christians before his Father. See also verse 34 of this chapter. But the 26th and 27th verses of the chapter we are now considering inform us that the Spirit makes intercession to Christ for us. This becomes evident to us when we consider that Revelation 2:23 informs us that Christ is the one who “searcheth the . . . hearts. “

Now we have the truth on this glorious revelation clearly before us. An impartation, or “measure,” of the Holy Spirit is given to all who sincerely obey the Gospel as it is addressed to alien sinners, and that “measure” of the Spirit

is spoken of as “the Spirit of adoption.” By reason of that “measure” of the Spirit, or “Spirit of adoption” in all Christians, they are related to Christ, and those who do not have it are not Christians, for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.” This “ Spirit of adoption” which is in all Christians “maketh intercession,” for those in whom it dwells, “with groanings [or breathings] which cannot be uttered” when those who have it are in distress, and “know not” what they “should pray for” as they “ought.” Finally, Christ, who “searcheth the hearts and knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,” makes intercession for us before the Father. That is to say, the Holy Spirit, by reason of the impartation given unto Christians, presents their condition to Christ, and Christ presents it to the Father.

What is set forth in the 28th verse? A consolation for all Christians who are afflicted, or, in any particular, are suffering, is here set forth in the assurance that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” But what is meant by the expression “called according to his purpose”? 2 Thessalonians 2:14 indicates that this expression refers to the call made by the Gospel, and does not mean anything more than this. See 1 Peter 4:11.

But what may we say of the 29th and 30th verses? They have reference to the Apostles. This becomes evident when we consider the word “glorified,” as found in the last of the 30th verse, and as explained in John 17:22. If further explanation is needed by any one it is found in the word “predestinate,” as here recorded, and explained in Ephesians 1:11. For those whom he “predestinated,” we learn in Ephesians 1:12, 13, were those who “first trusted in Christ,” and in contradistinction from those who “trusted after that” they had “heard the word of truth.” Moreover, the word “predestinate” in the New Testament always refers chiefly, if not entirely, to official character.

What do we find in the last part of this chapter? We find a statement of Paul's conclusions concerning the strength and security of God's provisions for Christians, as he had set forth those provisions in the preceding parts of this chapter. Besides, the argument is used, that as God had given his Son for mankind he would not withhold anything else from those who obey him, nor would he suffer them to be separated from his love “which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

CHAPTER IX

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed, first, concerning Paul's sorrow for his Jewish brethren who did not believe in Christ, and then concerning the favors they had received of God, and from whom Christ received his fleshly origin. Next we are informed of the fact that the word of God did have some effect among them, and a discrimination is given between the children of promise, and the children of the flesh, upon which discrimination national election was based. Then we find a defense of God's righteousness in making such an election, and in the midst of that defense we find a reference made to the potter's power over clay as an illustration of God's power over nations. From this the apostle passed to the calling of the Gentiles, and to the saving of a remnant of the Jews. The chapter is ended with a statement of the difference between the Israelites, or Jews, and the Gentiles, in regard to seeking righteousness. The Gentiles sought it "by faith," but the Israelites sought it "by the works of the law," and as a result the Israelites stumbled at Christ as a "stumbling stone" that was laid for them.

What is indicated by the 3rd verse of this chapter? When properly translated that verse indicates that Paul sympathized with his unbelieving Jewish brethren because he was once in their condition and was wishing himself "accursed from Christ." The translation of this verse, as given in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, intimates that Paul was disposed to wish that he could be crucified if that would convince his unbelieving Jewish brethren, and thereby be made a "curse" for them, on the principle that "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." See Galatians 3:13. The inference which some have drawn, that Paul could wish that he might be finally condemned of Christ if that would save his brethren, is, to say the least, very unreasonable. The idea that he could wish to be crucified, and, in that sense, be made a "curse" for his unbelieving brethren, if that would convince them of their mistake in rejecting Christ, is more in harmony with his sorrow in their behalf, and is not out of harmony with his desire for his own salvation. But the translation of this verse as given in the book titled "Living Oracles" is this: "For I also was, myself, wishing to be accursed from Christ." This translation is justified by the Greek text of this verse, and is in harmony with Paul's history, for

while in unbelief concerning Christ he seemed to share in the sentiment expressed in Matthew 27:25.

What may we say of the word “adoption” as recorded in the 4th verse of this chapter? We may learn what it means by reading Exodus 4:22, and Jeremiah 31:9, that the Israelites were God's adopted people. Besides they were intended to be the people of his “glory.” See Exodus 40:35; 1 Kings 8:11. Then the “covenants” were given to them, also the “giving of the law,” the “service” and the “promises.” The “fathers”—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob —were theirs, and Christ, in his earthward relationship came from them. Paul mentioned all these advantages, and honors, which pertained to the Israelites as a nation.

What may we learn by considering the 6th verse and to the end of the 13th? We may learn that Paul said, in a negative declaration, that the word of God did take some effect among his brethren. That declaration he then explained by another negative declaration in which he indicated that there were some in the nation of Israel as such, who were not genuine Israelites. This he explained by another negative declaration in which he indicated that there were some of Abraham's offspring who were not recognized as children of God. As an explanation of this Paul referred to God's promise of Isaac as the one through whom Abraham's offspring should be called, and referred to God's choice of Jacob over Esau before either of them was born. By such reasoning Paul indicated that God's decisions had something to do with the fact that Israel, as a nation, had rejected Christ.

What use may we make of the declaration that “they are not all Israel who are of Israel”? We may say that there were many who were connected with Israel, as a nation, who were not true Israelites. On the same principle there are many connected with the disciple brotherhood who are not true disciples. We may also venture to say that many are connected with sectarian bodies who are not genuine sectarians.

And what do we next find in this chapter? We find that Paul proceeded to defend God against the charge of unrighteousness; and this he did by quoting Moses, and stating a conclusion from that which he quoted from him. Then he again quoted Moses, and stated another conclusion. Having set all this forth he defended God against a complaint that he seemed to suppose some one would bring against him, and in so doing he referred to the power which

a potter has over clay, to make, of the same lump, one vessel to honor and another to dishonor, to illustrate God's power over the nations, and over men as representatives of nations, in order to accomplish his own divine purposes. In other words, Paul contended that, in order to accomplish the ends that he had in view, the God of heaven and earth had the right to choose one man and reject another, also to prefer one nation above another. Paul contended, likewise, that man has not the right to criticize, nor, in any respect, to question the righteousness of that which God does. Man accords to man the right to select men to work for him in order to accomplish his own purposes, on the supposition that every man understands his own business, and knows the kind of men he needs to do his work. And when a man of enterprise makes selection of one man to do one kind of work, and of another to do another kind, who has the right to criticize him? Thus it is with Jehovah. He has shown to mankind that he knew how to create a world, and how to arrange it, so as to astonish them every time they consider it in any of its parts, and this should satisfy them so that they should avoid all criticism of that which he has done, or may do, among the nations. And if, at any time, they venture to criticize him Paul would answer thus: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

But this is not all that is found in Paul's reasoning as set forth in this chapter. The Jews were well satisfied that their father Jacob was preferred above his brother Esau, and that Jehovah had decided before the two brothers were born that "the elder shall serve the younger," and this fact he used as a basis for his argument in regard to the fact that he raised up Pharaoh to accomplish a certain end, and, finally, called the Gentiles to accomplish another end.

But did not God show partiality toward Jacob and against Esau? We have already learned that God, who is unlimited in his powers, could see, even before Jacob and Esau were born, which of them would serve his purpose in fulfilling his promise to Abraham and Isaac, and that he had the right to give the supremacy to Jacob. But this does not explain the declaration, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Nor does that declaration need explaining when it is considered in its connection. In Genesis 25:23 the Lord said of Esau and Jacob, "The elder shall serve

the younger,” but did not say, “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau” till about fourteen hundred years later, or sixteen hundred, as we find when chronology is correctly computed. See Malachi 1:1-5. Besides, the evidence that God gave of his hatred for Esau was not on account of something that he could not avoid, but that evidence is recorded in Ezekiel 35th chapter. The 5th and 6th verses of that chapter declare of the nation called Edom, which sprang from Esau, “Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel, by the force of the sword, in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee.” These declarations, and others in the same chapter, clearly show that God overthrew the Edomites about twelve, or fourteen, hundred years after they began to be a people because they had hated the Israelites with “a perpetual hatred,” and killed many of them “in the time of their calamity” when God’s judgments were upon them. In view of all this we can understand that the declaration, “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau,” was not made with reference to Jacob and Esau, as persons, but with reference to the Israelites and Edomites as nations, because those nations sprang from Jacob and Esau. But this is not all that may be said. See also Numbers 20:14-21; Deuteronomy 2:1-6. We therein learn that God did not intend that the descendants of Jacob should, in any respect, mistreat the descendants of Esau, yet the Edomites did mistreat the Israelites. Finally, we should consider that while the Israelites were serving as bondmen in Egypt the Edomites were flourishing as a nation in Mount Seir. This seems as if God had loved Esau, but had hated Jacob, and further shows that he did not deal with those brothers in a partial manner except that he chose the younger to serve his purpose in fulfilling his promises to Abraham and Isaac. He had the right to make such a choice, even if judged by principles which are regarded righteous among mankind. Moreover, he never inflicted punishment on the descendants of Esau except when they had done wrong, and he has treated the descendants of Jacob on the same principle. In fact, the Jews have suffered more severely than any other nation by reason of their disobedience to God, except that they have not been blotted out. This was foretold in Deuteronomy 28:15-68. Yet throughout all their sufferings they have the assurance that while other nations have

been blotted out of existence they shall be preserved. See Jeremiah 30:11.

But what about Pharaoh, king of Egypt, as mentioned in the 17th verse? His case is already explained by the principle which has just been discussed. God needed, on the throne in Egypt, the kind of a man that Pharaoh was in order to open up the way for God's power to be made known. A mild and moderate king would have soon become alarmed and would have let the Israelites go before the Egyptians could be made to know that they should fear the God of Israel. Pharaoh was a stubborn specimen of humanity, and God even hardened his heart so that he might be more stubborn than he was by nature and education. God had the right to do this because of the evil that Pharaoh had been guilty of in oppressing the Israelites who were in bondage to him. On this principle God proceeded when he wished to build the tabernacle. See Exodus 31:6. He put "wisdom" in the hearts of the "wise-hearted," even as, in the case of Pharaoh, he put hardness into the hardhearted, when he needed to do so, in order to accomplish his ends. Mankind generally do the same. When they wish to make a musician, or a mechanic, they select one who has talent in that direction. In view of this we see the reasonableness of the declaration concerning God, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." But all this has reference to representative men in their official character, and to nations, as such, and does not refer to personal character. As a result, we learn that Paul was not, in the reasoning we are considering, dealing with the question of becoming Christians, nor with living the life of Christians, nor with reaching the Christian's home in glory.

But what may we say of the potter's power over the clay, which is here mentioned to illustrate God's power over man? In Jeremiah 18:1-10 that is explained to perfection, and the explanation there given shows that Paul referred to nations, or to official characters, and not to persons in their personal characters. As the potter is set forth by Jeremiah. the clay was tried for one vessel before it was condemned to be made into another vessel, even as God tried the Jews for one position among nations before he condemned them to occupy another position. The clay which the potter used was not condemned before it was dug out of the earth, but it was condemned after its unfitness for a certain vessel had been tested. This is the principle of fairness and righteousness with which God has

dealt with mankind in all ages. The only exception that has been made we find on those occasions when God has desired an official character to accomplish a certain end, and, then he has made choice of a child before he was born, as in the case of Jacob and Jeremiah. See Genesis 25:23, and Jeremiah 1:5.

Now we are prepared to understand that God was justified in rejecting the Jews, as a nation, when they had rejected the Gospel, and in giving the Gentiles an opportunity to hear the Gospel when he saw that they would, as nations, be disposed to accept it. See Acts 13:45, 46. He had made choice of the Jews, without consulting them, and had given them a fair trial with his law, and he proposed to make choice of the Gentiles, without consulting them, and he proposed to give them a fair trial with his Gospel. This was a part of God's righteousness, and it was in harmony with principles of fairness that are admitted among mankind. The divine righteousness as manifested toward the Jews was mentioned by the Apostle Paul in order to convince them of his righteousness in calling the Gentiles. This is the general lesson of this chapter.

What is indicated in the 27th verse? Paul there indicated that which is set forth in Jeremiah 30:11, in regard to the divine preservation of the Jews.

And what may we say of the 28th verse? It should be read in the light of 2 Peter 3:8, for though God's punishment of the Jews may seem long to them and to us, yet it will be short to him, for "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

What is meant by the reference made to Sodom and Gomorrah in the 29th verse? The cities known by those names were blotted out, and Paul declares that the Israelites would have been like those cities if the Lord had not left them a "remnant," or spared a part of them.

What special difference between Jews and Gentiles is stated in the last part of this chapter? The Jews tried to attain to righteousness by the works of the Jewish law, but the Gentiles tried to attain to it by faith in Christ, and by the outworkings of their faith. The Gentiles succeeded, while the Jews failed.

Why was it that Christ became a "stumbling stone" to the Jewish nation? The Jews, in their pride, desired temporal deliverance from their earthly enemies more than they desired spiritual deliverance from their sins. As a result,

when they read Isaiah 59:20, and other prophecies concerning Christ, they thought of an earthly redeemer who should deliver them from their earthly enemies, instead of considering him as a spiritual redeemer who would save them, spiritually, when they would turn away from their sins. Therefore, when Jesus did not make any effort to deliver them from their earthly enemies, but taught concerning their spiritual welfare, he became a “stumblingstone” to them.

Why did the Apostle Paul write to the “saints” at Rome that which we have just considered? He desired to put into the hands of those “saints” such facts, truths, and arguments, as would enable them to convince the un-Christian Jews of their unreasonable, and unscriptural, effort to attain to righteousness before God by the works of the law. The Christians in Rome were intended to be instructors of Jews and Gentiles who did not believe in Christ, and Paul wished to enable those Christians to defend themselves against all criticisms of both classes of unbelievers, and, if possible, to convince as many as they could of both classes. His method of reasoning is a model for all who write on controverted subjects.

CHAPTER X

What is here set forth for us to consider? In this chapter Paul turned again to his brethren in Christ who were at Rome, and addressed them directly, and told them how he felt, and that he prayed, in behalf of un-Christian Israel. He told his brethren of the zeal, and ignorance, of those Jews who did not believe in Christ, likewise of that which the Jewish law set forth which is in harmony with the Gospel, as far as the nearness of the “word of faith” was concerned. Then he set forth what the “word of faith” requires, and that the time had come when God was impartial toward both Jews and Gentiles. To this he added that Israel—the Jews—had “not all obeyed the Gospel,” and then made mention of the fact that God had made himself known to the Gentiles who were accepting him, and by whom he intended to “provoke” them to obedience. The chapter is ended by a quotation from Isaiah concerning the Gentiles in regard to obedience, and concerning the Jews in regard to disobedience.

What is set forth in the 2nd and 3rd verses of this chapter? Paul's testimony concerning the zeal of the un-Christian Jews is set forth, and by considering that testimony we

may learn that those Jews had zeal without knowledge. Is it possible for mankind, generally, to have zeal without knowledge? It is. Ignorance of truth has been the cause of as much devotion as an intelligent faith has been, and sometimes the difference between the devotion caused by ignorance of truth, and that caused by intelligent faith, is not easily discriminated. What is the chief difference between those two grades of devotion? Unwillingness to learn the truth is the most common indication of devotion caused by ignorance of truth, while willingness to learn more truth is the most common indication of devotion caused by an intelligent faith. What is meant by the expressions “God's righteousness” and “their own righteousness,” as found in the 3rd verse? Chapter 1:16, 17 inform us that the righteousness of God—his right-doing toward mankind—is revealed in the Gospel. Then the fact that the un-Christian Jews were trying to be acceptable before God by clinging to the law, given to them through Moses, indicates that “their own righteousness,” as here mentioned, was their obedience to that law. This is further evident by Paul's declaration in the 4th verse, that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.”

What may we further say of the 4th verse? It sets forth the line of demarcation between all the primitive Christians, and the un-Christian Jews, and the line between all who now occupy the position of the primitive, or New Testament, Christians, and all other religionists of the so-called Christian world. Those who occupy that position do not go back to the Jewish law for any religious practice, nor to justify any practice, in either worship or work. But this is not true of any church that is not mentioned in the New Testament. From the Roman Catholics to the Salvation Army, all religionists, of the so-called “Christendom,” go to the Jewish law for one, or more than one, of their practices, or to justify one, or more, of their practices. But the New Testament Church declares with Paul that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.” This Church goes back to the Old Testament for history, but not for authority.

Is there any danger to professed Christians if they go to the Jewish law for any practices, or to justify any practices? Galatians 5:1-4 indicate that all Gentile Christians who resort to the Jewish law for any practice, or to find reason for practice, in religious worship and work, do there

by become “fallen from grace,” and make Christ “of no effect” unto themselves.

Did Moses describe “the righteousness which is of the law,” also “the righteousness which is of faith”? The 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th verses of this chapter so indicate. What is the force of the expression “shall live by them,” as found in the last part of the 6th verse? In Galatians 3:12 we find the expression “shall live in them,” used with reference to the same idea, and this implies that if a man proposes to do the commands of the law he should live in those commands. That is certainly its meaning in Leviticus 18:5. But could it not mean that those who obeyed the law could have life by the law? No. Chapter 3:20 and Galatians 3:11, 21 forbid such a conclusion, especially since the gospel of Christ has been perfected.

What may we say of that which Paul declares that Moses wrote concerning “the righteousness which is by faith”? Everything in the writings of Moses which Paul declares has reference to “the righteousness which is by faith” is indicated in Deuteronomy 30:11-14, and that scripture makes mention of the end which the law was intended to accomplish in those to whom it was given. That end was expressed by the word “faith.” The entire Jewish law, with all else set forth in the Old Testament, was intended to show to the Jew, and to all others, that God always meant what he said, and said what he meant. Therefore, the end which the law had in view was to produce faith in the Jew, and to prepare both Jews and Gentiles to believe wholeheartedly all that is set forth in the Gospel, called “the righteousness which is of faith.” In view of this fact Paul was justified in passing from that which he quoted from Moses over to the Gospel, and in placing the interpretation that he did on the words of Moses which he quoted on this subject. God intended that the law should be so studied by the Jew that it should be in his heart. See Deuteronomy 6:6-9. In some instances that end was accomplished. See Psalm 119:11. But in most instances the Jewish law did not win the heart of the Jew. When that law had been fully tried God said that he would “make a new covenant with the house of Israel,” . . . and in that new covenant he would put his “law in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts.” This he proposed to do by sending his own Son into the world to win the hearts of mankind, by his goodness and mercy. Paul referred to this when he prayed for the Ephesian brethren, that Christ might dwell in their “hearts by faith.”

(Ephesians 3:17.) In proportion as Christ wins the hearts of mankind he is personally loved, and thus has a place in their hearts, so that his law is in their hearts, and, as a result, may be obeyed with delight.

What may we say of the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses of this chapter? Those verses belong together, and explain each other. The 9th mentions confession and faith, and the 10th explains that faith comes before confession of faith, while the 11th verse declares that the result of faith in Christ is that “Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”

And what may we say of the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th verses? The 12th verse declares God's impartiality toward Jews and Gentiles, and this is somewhat explained in the 13th verse. Then in the 14th verse mention is made of the necessity of preaching in order that belief may be produced, and the 15th mentions the necessity of sending men to preach, and a quotation is made from Isaiah concerning those who preach “the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” What is meant by the reference made to “the feet” of those who preach the Gospel? That is a poetic reference, or figure of speech, in which “the feet” of the messenger of good tidings are spoken of as “beautiful” because of the “beautiful” message that he brings.

To what is reference made in the 16th verse? Reference is here made to the rejection of the Gospel. by unbelieving Jews, and that such rejection was foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, in his question, “Who hath believed our report?” Isaiah's intimation here is that some would not believe the report, divinely given, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What information is given in the 17th verse? Paul here informs us that “hearing” is a channel through which faith is produced, and then explains that he means such “hearing” as is “produced by the word of God” when preached to mankind. If the Scriptures are read, then the eye becomes the inlet of the divine testimony to the mind. See John 20:30, 31; Acts 17:11, 12. But when the Scriptures are heard then the ear becomes the inlet of that testimony to the mind. See Acts 2:37; 14:1.

How did the “sound” of the preaching that was done by the Apostles go “into all the earth”? On the day of Pentecost, mentioned in the 2nd chapter of Acts, Jews were present in Jerusalem out of “every nation under heaven,” who could talk the languages of all those nations. Those Jews heard the preaching of the Apostles, and when they returned, to their homes, in the nations to which they be

longed, they carried with them something of that preaching. Thus it was that the Gospel was taken to Rome before any of the Apostles visited that city. On that principle the Gospel might now be taken to all the world from America, or from Great Britain, were it not for that hateful, abominable, something known as sectarianism. Persons are constantly coming to these countries, from all other nations, and they might learn the Gospel, become impressed with its excellencies, and be disposed to take it back to their own people. But they do not find the Gospel, in its simplicity, when they visit the mentioned nations, but a multitude of jangling sects, and worldly-minded professors of religion; as a result the foreigners who visit America and Great Britain see but little, or no, advantage in the religions they behold among us.

What is here referred to by the purpose of God to “provoke” the Jews “to jealousy” by them “that are no people, and by a foolish nation”? Reference is made to the fact that the Gentiles as nations would accept the Gospel, and that the Jews would be thereby made “jealous,” and even angry. The reason for this is given in Deuteronomy 32:21. Read that scripture.

What may we say of the 20th and 21st verses? They set before us a quotation from Isaiah which Paul applies to the acceptance of the Gospel on the part of the Gentiles, and of its rejection by the Jews.

CHAPTER XI

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are informed of Paul's reasoning to show that the Jews were not “cast away” as a people, and that the time of their blindness concerning the Gospel was limited. The chapter is ended with words of praise concerning “the wisdom and knowledge of God.”

What was the first reason that Paul gave for declaring that God had not “cast away his people”? The fact that he was, himself, an Israelite, and he was not cast away, was his first reason. Then his second reason, for thus declaring, was that in the days of Elijah when Israel had, generally, gone into idolatry, and Elijah thought that he was “left alone,” yet, even then, the Lord had “seven thousand men” who had “not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.” Having given these two reasons Paul declared, “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” Then Paul declared that this “elec-

tion” could not be by both grace and works, which was an important thought for all Jews, whether they were Christians or not, to keep in mind. Next he declared that Israel, referring to the un-Christian Jews, had not “obtained” that which they sought for, but that the “election,” or those who had become Christians, had “obtained it,” and, finally, declared that “the rest were blinded.” Having made this declaration concerning the blindness of the un-Christian Jews, Paul proceeded to quote Isaiah and David in regard to blindness of mind and heart as a special judgment for evil that had been previously committed.

Is it possible for us to understand that God was justified in sending a judgment of blindness on the Jews for their disobedience? Yes, if we read the prophetic books of the Old Testament, and become acquainted with the appeals that God made to the Jews, and his forbearance with them, then we can understand that he was justified in all the severity that he used in punishing them, even sending upon them a judgment of blindness. The prophetic books of the Old Testament indicate that God exhausted the powers, and possibilities, of human language, with divine decision chosen, to convince the Jews of their wrongs, and to lead them to repentance. But as they refused, therefore, God was certainly justified in all that he inflicted on them. Besides, they closed their eyes to the Savior's teaching, in course of his personal ministry (Matthew 13:15), and went on in their disobedience. Matthew 23:37 gives us information concerning the Savior's desires in their behalf, and concerning their rejection of his teaching. Then we learn that their house was left unto them “desolate,” which means that they had become a rejected people. As they had rejected Christ, so he rejected them.

Is the blindness of the Jews concerning the Gospel to continue till the end of time? No. There are several intimations in this chapter that the time will come when their blindness will be ended.

1. The question, “How much more their fulness?” as found in the last of the 12th verse, is an intimation in their favor.
2. The question, “What shall the receiving of them be?” as found in the 15th verse, is another intimation in their favor.
3. The entire 23rd verse of this chapter is also an intimation in their favor.
4. The last part of the 24th verse likewise intimates in their favor.
5. The last of the 25th verse is to the same effect.

6. The entire 26th verse bears in the same direction, for Paul is here writing concerning that part of Israel that was “blinded.”

7. The 27th verse has the same bearing.

8. The same is true of the 28th verse.

9. And the same may be said of the 29th verse.

10. The 32nd verse makes mention of the fact that God had “concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon them all,” and this does not mean that he might reject them all. Therefore this verse is also in favor of the doctrine that the “blinded” part of the Jews will yet become believers. 2 Corinthians 3:16 teaches the same concerning blinded Israel, or their descendants.

What may we say to those who deny that there is any scriptural reason to hope that the Jews will ever become Christians? We may say to them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.” Not one of the ten intimations found in this chapter, that are in favor of the Jews, can be reasonably explained if the hope of their conversion is denied. The same is true of the intimation given in the last of Luke 21:24, and in 2 Corinthians 3:16, not to speak of other scriptures which bear in the same direction.

What may we learn by considering the 13th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the church in Rome consisted of Gentile converts. Were there any Jews in that church? We are not informed, except that Aquila and Priscilla were there for a time, but had to leave. See chapter 16:3, also Acts 18:2. Likewise a woman named “Mary” was there and certain “kinsmen” of Paul. But Acts 28:17-19 indicate that “the chief of the Jews” at Rome were not Christians when Paul arrived there, and the record does not intimate, besides the exceptions mentioned, that Jews of any other class in Rome were Christians. Moreover, the 13th verse of the 1st chapter of the letter we are considering clearly implies that the church in Rome was made up of converts from among the Gentiles. The supposition that the church in Rome consisted largely of converts from among the Jews is without foundation in the Sacred Text. Moreover, this groundless supposition has been the secret of confusion in many minds while studying the letter which Paul addressed to that church. All those who have entertained this supposition have tried to apply the different parts of this letter to the church at Rome, and, therefore, have become confused, and in order to work their way through

their confusion they have strained many passages, and have given them a fanciful bearing. But when we consider that this letter was addressed to the “saints” in Rome who were converted from among the Gentiles, and that Paul endeavored to place in their hands a document which would, in some of its parts, apply to themselves, and, in other parts, apply to the un-Christian Gentiles who were about them, and, in other of its parts, would apply to the un-Christian Jews who were about them—then, and then only, can we understand the several parts of this letter in their true application.

What may we say of the parable of the “olive” trees that are mentioned in this chapter? The Jews who were Christians were likened to a good olive tree, and the Gentiles to a wild olive tree. The Jews who rejected Christ were likened unto branches that were broken off from their own olive tree, and the Gentiles who accepted Christ were likened unto branches from a wild olive tree who were grafted into a good olive tree. The Gentile converts were warned not to boast against the branches that were broken off because God is able to graft them in again. This implies that the unbelieving Jews may yet be converted.

What may we learn by considering the 26th verse? We may learn that Paul extends the bearing of Isaiah 59:20, so as to apply it to the time when the “blindness” of the “blinded” Jews will be taken from them, and they will become believers so as to be grafted into their own olive tree from which they were broken off by reason of their unbelief.

What is the bearing of the statement that the “blinded” Jews are “beloved for their fathers' sakes”? The bearing is that God has not forgotten the love which he had expressed toward Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, nor the oath which he had sworn to Abraham concerning his descendants. See Deuteronomy 7:8; 9:5; 10:15. The next verse confirms this idea, for it declares that “the gifts and callings of God are without repentance”; that is, are without repentance on God's part, and, thus, are not to be recalled. This does not mean that “the gifts and callings of God” are bestowed on man without regard to his character, and, especially, does not mean that salvation is bestowed on man regardless of his repentance of his sins. But the meaning is, that God did not propose to repent of the promise that he had made to Abraham in regard to his descendants, and therefore still loves the Jews, as a nation, though,

in the meantime, they are under his condemnation because they rejected Christ.

In view of all that has been set forth concerning this chapter the remainder of it will be clear to all who study it with care. The purpose in the one who writes these “questions, answers, and remarks,” is not to explain every passage so that the reader will not need to think, but simply to assist the reader through the most difficult passages, as well as present a connected view of every chapter so that it may be understood.

CHAPTER XII

What is set forth in this chapter? An exhortation to Christians, based on the revelations thus far made in this letter, is here set forth. This exhortation was addressed, in part, to Christians in view of their special gifts which were bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and all other parts of it were addressed to Christians as such, and are, therefore, applicable to Christians in all generations.

Are there any non-essentials in those parts of this exhortation which are addressed to Christians as such? No. Every sentence of the entire chapter, except the 6th and 7th verses, applies to Christians in all generations.

What may we say of this chapter in its bearings on Christians, and through them on those of mankind who are not Christians? By itself considered this chapter will do more, if faithfully observed, than all uninspired books combined, to ennoble, purify, and adorn, mankind. It is so plain that it may be understood by all classes of responsible beings, and, therefore, it is superior to all human systems of philosophy, in regard to simplicity, as well as in its teaching.

What would be the result if the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter would be obeyed by all professed Christians? Many of them would be much better than they are, and the Redeemer's cause would become the power for good that it was divinely intended to be. A wholehearted conforming to the exhortation in these two verses would revolutionize the so-called Christendom, and would soon penetrate the heart of heathendom. But, instead of conforming to that exhortation many professed Christians are disposed to present their bodies “a living sacrifice” unto their own earthward ambitions, and they seem to think that by' so doing they are rendering a “reasonable service.” Many of them seem to think that a preacher's time and talents belong to the Lord, but their time and talents belong to themselves.

As a result they cherish the conclusion that preachers are under obligation to use their speaking ability for the Lord's honor and glory, but they can use their money-making ability for their own honor and glory. If a preacher fails to pay his debts they are ready to exclude him as a dishonest man, while the reason that he does not pay them often is because his money-loving brethren do not remunerate him as they should. These remarks do not apply to the man who tries to preach, but cannot, nor to the one who decided to preach because he was too lazy to work at some other calling, nor even to the preacher who is a spendthrift, or who lacks ordinary financial ability. But reference is here made to the meager remuneration which many preachers receive from congregations that are rich in the things of this world, but poor in faith. In many instances a poor congregation will raise the sum of two hundred dollars a year for the Lord's work, while a congregation worth a quarter of a million dollars will not raise any more than that sum for his work. Certainly rich professors of Christ do not present their "bodies as living sacrifices, wholly acceptable unto God," as their "reasonable service," while they are withholding from the Lord's cause what is due, and decline to give as God has prospered them. All who belong to that class should read Paul's charge as recorded in 1 Timothy 6:17-19. But, as a rule, they will not read that charge. If they read it they will not consider it. On the contrary, they will cling to their riches, and try to increase them, as if their eternal salvation would depend on the amount of their earthly wealth, instead of considering that their salvation will depend on the amount of it that they give to the Lord's cause, as well as on their conduct in other respects.

What is the idea set forth by the word "prove" as found in the 2nd verse of this chapter? That word as there used means "test" or "show forth," and not to "prove" in the sense of "sustain by argument." In other words, Paul exhorted the "brethren" at Rome thus: "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," and then stated that the end in view was "that ye may prove [test, or show forth] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." That is to say, by doing what Paul exhorted those brethren to do, they could test or show forth what the will of God is, and what it could do for them. Christians should, individually, test what the will of God can do for them and in them, and, then, what it can do for others through them.

Why did Paul warn his brethren at Rome against self-conceit twice in this chapter, as we may learn by reading the 3rd and 16th verses? We are not informed, but Proverbs 26:12 suggests the reason. Those who are “wise” in their “own conceits” are constantly tempted to show themselves, or to do, or say, something which will bring them into prominence. What is worse is their disposition to reject good counsel. They are so self-important that they overestimate everything that pertains to themselves, and they underestimate all that pertains to others. How may those who are by nature self-conceited become otherwise? By reading Isaiah 10:5-18 and Daniel 4th chapter every day for a month they will learn to keep their lips closed concerning their own greatness. Besides, Proverbs 27:2, and John 7:18, should be read every day by all who are disposed to think highly of themselves.

If we cannot “live peaceably” with a man, what should we do? The 18th verse exhorts Christians to go to the limit of that which is “possible” in trying to live “peaceably with all men.” But when we reach that limit, and peace is not secured, then we should follow the example of Paul and Barnabas when they had a dispute about John Mark. See Acts 15:37-39. But what should a husband and wife do when they cannot live peaceably with each other? They should consider how they will wish they had treated each other when they will confront each other in death. Then their temper will subside, and they will be brought to their sober senses.

Does a judge, or a juror, avenge himself when he pronounces a sentence of justice on a wrong doer of any kind? No. Neither does a sheriff avenge himself when he hangs a man who has been pronounced guilty of murder in the first degree, if he executes the sentence at the time and place, and in the manner, prescribed by law, and not to gratify his own feelings.

Can we always overcome evil with good? No. Some persons become insane when they become angry, and they will never repent till death will overtake them, and, even then, some of them will not repent. The Lord may not regard such persons as responsible, and we should not hold them to strict accountability. But a majority of persons can be impressed favorably by good treatment, and, sooner or later, can be made ashamed of themselves if they receive good for evil. Mankind are, generally, more easily controlled if their tempers are riot stirred. The chief ex-

ception to this is when those in error are made angry by plain preaching, and while under the influence of anger begin to study the Scriptures in order to convict the preacher of error. In many instances those who begin to study the Scriptures in anger become converted by that which they find in them.

CHAPTER XIII

What is offered to Bible readers in this chapter? An exhortation to Christians in regard to submission to civil authorities is here offered, likewise an exhortation requiring them to render to all mankind their dues, and to love each other, followed by a statement of that which love will not do, and then of that which love does. The chapter is ended with a warning, followed by another exhortation.

In what sense are civil powers, as secular organizations, ordained of God? The Greek word here translated by the English word “ordained” means “to arrange, to set, appoint.” It means also “to allot, assign.” In view of such shades of meaning we can understand that civil powers are of divine permission, and, in that sense are “ordained” of God.

Are all laws of all the civil governments on earth “ordained” of God? No. Many of the laws in a majority of the civil governments are wrong, yet the institution known as “civil government” is “ordained of God,” or is a divine arrangement. And what should Christians do in regard to laws that they know are not right? They should protest against them, and endeavor to have them changed. If those laws tend to prevent Christians from doing their religious duties, then the Apostle Peter's declaration, “We ought to obey God rather than men,” is a declaration that we should adopt, for it sets forth a principle on which we should act.

What should we say to those who deny that this chapter, which we are now considering, refers to civil governments, but affirm that it refers to the church, and that the rulers that are here mentioned mean the elders of the church? We should tell them that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” Then we should refer them to Titus 3:1, and ask them about the meaning of the word “magistrates” in that verse. Next we should refer them to 1 Peter 2:13, 14, and inquire of them for the meaning of the words “king” and “governors” in those scriptures. Finally we should ask them whether the word “trib-

ute,” in Matthew 22:18-21 and in the 6th verse of this chapter, does not mean the same in both places, and, thus, whether it does not, in both places, refer to taxes which civil governments demand of their subjects. Men who are so fanciful that they deny that the first part of the chapter now under consideration certainly refers to civil governments are too fanciful to be trusted with the Gospel.

What is the bearing of the command, “Owe no man anything,” as recorded in the 8th verse? Its bearing is exactly according to the ordinary meaning of the words of that command when thus placed together, and are found in such a connection. Paul had commanded those whom he addressed to render “to all their dues.” Among those dues he mentioned “tribute custom,” “fear,” and “honor.” The word “tribute” means taxes, and the word “custom,” in such connection, means “tariff” on imported goods. Then he commanded, “Owe no man anything.” But we should not strain this command, for we do not “owe” anything that is not due. Therefore we may borrow and promise to pay, likewise we may rent and promise to pay. But not until the limit of our promise has come do we “owe” what we promise, because not till that limit is reached is that which we have promised really due. We are to render to all their “dues,” but that which we promise is not due till the time covered by our promise has ended. Any other conclusion concerning this question would constantly bring all Christians under condemnation. If we work for a man he owes us more each minute if he owes what we have earned, and if a man works for us we owe him more each minute. The same is true in regard to hiring or renting anything. But if we say to a man, “If you will work for me all this day I will pay you a dollar,” then the dollar is not due till the day's work is ended.

Why did Paul make an exception of “love” when he commanded Christians not to owe anyone anything? He made an exception of “love” because love's debt cannot be fully paid. If we pay all that is due to one person, we still owe some one else a debt of love.

What may we say of the 10th verse? Paul's definition of “love” in its inward bearing, as found in that verse, is so evident that we can know that it is correct. For if “love is the fulfilling of the law,” then the fulfilling of the law is love. A definition—correct definition—can always be substituted for that which it defines, and the sense be preserved. The fulfilling of the law, in strictness of speech, is the formal expression of love. The same is true

of love for Christ and for the Father. See John 14:21; 1 John 5:3. In view of all this we can understand how the Jewish law and the prophets could all “hang” on the two great commands, to love God with all the heart, and to love a neighbor as one's self. See Matthew 22:36-40. The Gospel likewise “hangs” on the same commands, with the additional requirement, “to love one's enemies.” See Matthew 5:43, 44. To love God, love one's neighbors, and love one's enemies, are the three great commands of the Gospel.

What may we say of the warning and exhortation recorded in the last part of this chapter? They are applicable to all Christians, and should be seriously considered by them all. Multitudes of professed Christians are still asleep, if they may be judged by their indifference to their duties, and to the demands of the Redeemer's cause. Besides, it is true of all Christians that their “salvation” is nearer than when they first believed, or began to believe. For that reason they should “cast off the works of darkness,” and “put on the armor of light.” They should likewise “walk honestly,” “put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” and “make not provision for the flesh” to obey its lusts.

CHAPTER XIV

What do we find in this chapter? We find here an exhortation to Christians with reference to weak brethren, and how to treat them so as to save them.

What would be the result if the exhortation here set forth would be observed with care by all Christians? They would dwell together in the unity of the Spirit. This exhortation will keep peace in the church in proportion as it is observed. It informs Christians how to bear with each other in regard to their personal peculiarities and preferences, likes and dislikes. It warns them against judging each other in regard to questions wherein liberty is granted, and against exercising their liberty when they learn that some one is offended by it. The bearing of this exhortation is against the tyranny of opinions and preferences. Its observance by all professed Christians would have prevented most of the divisions which now exist, and, if adopted by all professed Christians, it would result in ending many existing divisions. Those who desired musical instruments in religious worship, and human societies in religious work, would not have insisted on them if they had only observed this exhortation. Besides, those who now desire them would

discard them as soon as they would be informed that they are offensive to some of their brethren, if they would only adopt this exhortation.

What may we learn by considering the 7th and 8th verses of this chapter? We may learn that man's responsibility is determined by his relationship, and, therefore, by his influence. For this reason all Christians need to be careful in regard to their conduct and speech. What they say and do will affect others as well as themselves, and will result in good or evil for time and eternity.

Does the teaching of this chapter have any bearing on the worship and work of the Church? Yes, though its first application is in regard to personal preferences and peculiarities, and forbearance with reference to them, yet the 13th verse, with the 23rd verse, shows that its application is general. The latter part of this chapter especially bears against all adoption of devices whereby a weak brother or sister is offended.

What shall we say of those who introduce devices which offend the best informed members of that church? They show a disregard of reason as well as of divine revelation, and the results of their conduct clearly show that they were never truly converted to Christ, or that they have become "reprobates," and, therefore, are without proof that they are Christians, in the New Testament sense. In most instances they may be justly regarded as heretics.

What may we learn by considering the 11th and 12th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul mentioned the divine supremacy, and man's personal accountability, as a basis of appeal to his brethren at Rome not to judge each other in regard to questions of personal liberty. Having mentioned this basis he then appealed to them not to judge each other any more in regard to such things, but rather to judge that they should not put a stumbling block in each other's way. To this he added that in regard to things to eat, over which there was some dispute among them, "there is nothing unclean of itself." In other words, the distinction in regard to unclean beasts, as set forth in the Jewish law, had been ended. See chapter 10:4. Yet if a man would esteem anything unclean, then it became unclean to him, because in eating of it he would eat in a doubtful frame of mind, and, therefore, would be condemned, because "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

What may we say of the 15th verse? If it had been observed with care, by all disciples of Christ, then innova-

tionism would never have been introduced among them. This means that only by the exercise of an uncharitable disposition could innovations be introduced among disciples of Christ at any time.

But should the eating of meats that were offensive be classed with innovations that are offensive? No. They do not belong to the same class. In 1 Timothy 4:3 we learn that “meats” were “created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth.” But this is not true of musical instruments that men have made, nor of any other human devices. The meats to which Paul referred were divinely created, but the innovations which have made disciples of Christ a divided people are manmade devices. Therefore, the very best of those devices have not the dignity of a swine, yet, in many instances, they have been adopted, and adhered to, as if they were gods.

And what of the 19th verse? It sets forth an exhortation which will reform all churches that are at variance with the New Testament, and will preserve the churches of Christ from all foolishness, to the extent that they will adopt and observe it as a ruling principle. “The things which make for peace,” are those which are divinely required, or, at least, are divinely sanctioned. And the “things wherewith one may edify another,” are things that are free from foolishness. Entertainment without edification has proved the ruin of mankind, generally, and has certainly demoralized every church that has adopted it.

What may we learn by considering the 14th and 20th verses of this chapter together? We may learn that in order to be acceptable to God it is necessary for us to do right, and to do it in the right condition of mind. A right act done in the wrong frame of mind will not be acceptable, but, on the contrary, it will be sinful. Idols were a mere imagination, as far as they were regarded as objects of worship. Therefore, the fact that certain meats had been offered to idols did not affect them in reality. But those who were weak enough to suppose that idols could affect meats offered to them, and, therefore, that such meats should not be eaten, would sin if they should venture to eat them. In view of this, those, who knew that an idol could not affect meats offered to it, were warned by* Paul against setting an example which would embolden the weak ones to eat such meats, for they would eat of them in a doubtful frame of mind.

If a doubtful condition of mind in doing a right act can

make it wrong, the question arises whether a satisfied condition of mind *can* make a wrong act right? To this question a negative answer must be given, when we consider Matthew 15:9, and many other scriptures which bear in the same direction. Besides, the declaration that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin,” when properly considered, impels us to conclude that we must do right as well as have the right frame of mind, for the faith which is acceptable to God is produced by the word of God. Finally, the fact that Paul thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Christ, and did many of them in “good conscience,” though in so doing he became “a blasphemer” and a “persecutor,” settles this question. See Acts 23:1; 26:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:13. When all the scriptures bearing on the question of acceptable worship and work, in heaven's sight, are considered, we must conclude that we need to do the right act, in the right manner, at the right time, and in the right condition of mind.

Before leaving this chapter we should consider the question, whether the charity herein recommended should be extended to the sectarian denominations, or to any others that have not shown the disposition to be Christians of the New Testament order. This question is easily answered when we consider the obedience mentioned in the 6th chapter of this letter. Those that have not thus obeyed, or having thus obeyed have turned from what their obedience meant, and have joined some body of people not mentioned in the Gospel, are certainly doubtful characters. Therefore the charity which is here recommended cannot be extended to them in full assurance of faith, especially as their errors are not such as are mentioned in this chapter, but, as a rule, are real heresies.

CHAPTER XV

And what *is* set forth in this chapter? That the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and thereby imitate Christ, is first set forth. Then a quotation from the Old Testament concerning Christ is set before us, and the use which we should make of the Old Testament is indicated. Next we find a prayer of Paul for the brethren at Rome, followed by an exhortation, and then an explanation of Christ's relation to the Jews and to the Gentiles. In making this explanation Paul made four quotations from the Old Testament concerning the Gentiles. Another prayer of Paul is then set before us, followed by a statement of his confi-

dence in the brethren at Rome, and a statement of his reason for writing to them. This is followed by a few statements of his own preaching, and of his disposition not to speak of that which God had done through others, nor to preach in places where others had been preaching. Near the close of this chapter we find remarks concerning Paul's purpose to go to Rome after having gone to Jerusalem, and we find a request that brethren he addressed would pray for him.

What may we say of the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? They seem to be the conclusion of the exhortations set forth in the preceding chapter. In the light of these verses should not the "strong" disciples, as many of them profess to be, who desire instrumental music in worship, bear with the "weak" ones who do not desire it? They should, and, therefore, should not try to "please" themselves, but "every one" of that class should try to "please his neighbor for his good to edification." All disciples of Christ know that "edification" is not found in musical instruments, and that playing a musical instrument is not a part of worship as authorized by the Savior. But the question may arise, whether those who are "strong," in the Scriptures, as many seem to be who oppose such instruments in worship, ought not to bear with those who are "weak" enough to desire them. In answer to this inquiry the statement may be made that the "strong" of that class have, in many instances, borne with the "weak" ones of the other class, till the desire for musical instruments showed itself to be ungodly and even idolatrous. In some instances that desire has shown itself in disregard for common veracity and common honesty.

What is indicated in the 4th verse? The use that readers of the New Testament should make of the Old Testament, is here indicated, and the indication here given suggests that Christians should now make the same use of the Old Testament that the Apostles made after the Holy Spirit came upon them as the Spirit's descent upon them is recorded in Acts 2nd chapter. The Old Testament pointed forward to the New and was fulfilled in the New, yet those who are under the New Testament should use the Old as a book of history and law and prophecy given to God's ancient people, but not as binding on us except wherein it has been applied to us by inspired writers of the New Testament, or is evidently in harmony with the New Testament. But even those parts of the Old Testament which are annulled by the New were written, and are preserved, for

our learning. The Old Testament, as a volume, informs us that God always meant what he said and said what he meant. Therefore, just in proportion as we are acquainted with the Old Testament we are filled with reverence for the New. David sets forth this idea in Psalm 119:7, and so does Paul in Hebrews 2:1-4. In proportion as we learn of God's dealings with the ancients we shall be filled with reverence for all that he says to us by his Son in the Gospel. On the other hand, in proportion as we are ignorant of God's dealings with the ancients we are liable to trifle with his requirements in the Gospel. All carping and quibbling about the meaning of Gospel requirements are, in most instances, the result of ignorance of the Old Testament revelation that God always meant what he said and said what he meant.

What may we learn by considering the 5th and 6th verses? We may learn that Paul prayed that the brethren at Rome might be "like-minded" in order that they might "with one mind and one mouth glorify God." What does this imply in regard to division, and strife, among Christians? It implies that everything of that kind is all wrong, and that it hinders Christians from glorifying God.

And what of the 7th verse? It states Paul's conclusion from that which he had prayed for, and imposes on Christians one of the most difficult of obligations, namely, to receive each other as Christ received the Apostles and all other Christians.

What is set forth in the 8th verse, and onward to the close of the 12th? Christ's relationship to the Jews, in regard to circumcision, and through them to the Gentiles, is here set forth. We can understand that this was appropriate, as Paul was writing to a Gentile church. Gentile Christians needed to understand their obligations to the Jews, also that the divine purpose concerning them was set forth in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. Having set forth what they needed to understand, on these questions, Paul wrote the 13th and 14th verses for their comfort. The 15th and 16th verses explain Paul's disposition in writing to the brethren in Rome, and the end that he had in view.

What may we say of the information offered to us in the 17th verse and onward to the close of the 24th? In those verses Paul makes mention of his own labors in preaching the Gospel, and of the labors of others, also that he had endeavored to preach where the Gospel had not been made

known, and, on that account, he had been hindered in regard to his purpose to go to Rome, but intimated that he would soon be ready to visit the brethren in that city. What may we say of Paul's disposition "to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest" he "should build upon another man's foundation"? His disposition was the very opposite of the modern pastor, who endeavors to find churches already established, and able to pay him a good salary. It was and is also the opposite of the disposition of those evangelists that hunt for congregations that are able to give them good remuneration, but will not go to those that are weak unless guaranteed a support while so doing.

And what of the 25th, 26th and 27th verses? In them Paul made mention of his mission to Jerusalem to take the contribution of the churches in Greece to the poor saints at Jerusalem, and of the appropriateness of such contribution in view of that which they of Greece had received from the brethren at Jerusalem. Besides that which has just been mentioned, the word "contribution," as found in the 26th verse, should be specially considered, for the Greek word here translated "contribution" is the same that is translated by the word "fellowship" in Acts 2:42. Therefore "fellowship," when mentioned in the New Testament, as something made, or done, or attended to, refers to the contribution.

And what may we learn by considering the last part of this chapter? We may learn of Paul's purpose to visit Rome when he would have accomplished his mission to Jerusalem, also of the assurance he had with reference to going to them "in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ." Next we may learn of his desire that the brethren in Rome should pray for him, that he "might be delivered from them" in Judea, that did "not believe" in Christ, and that his "service" which he had "for Jerusalem" might be "accepted of the saints" for whom it was intended, so that he might go to Rome, and with the church there be "refreshed."

What may we say of the entire chapter we have just considered? It is very instructive on several subjects which all who desire to be saved should understand. Therefore it should be much studied in private and should be often read in public. It offers to us an insight into Paul's purposes which we do not find set forth in any other chapter of his history, and the insight here offered shows that his

example was certainly against the preacher—pastor over an established congregation at a set salary.

CHAPTER XVI

What is set forth in this chapter for the edification of Bible readers? We are here edified by the personal mention which Paul made, with commendations, of certain disciples whom he knew. Then we are edified by the warning given against certain divisive characters, and the assurance that he gave in regard to the supremacy over Satan which the brethren at Rome would soon enjoy. Next we find mention of those who united with Paul in saluting the church at Rome. Finally, we read of Paul's benediction to the "saints" at Rome.

What should we say to those who say that the Greek word translated "servant" in the 1st verse of this chapter is the same word that is translated by the word "deacon" in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, and on that account say that deaconesses should now be appointed in every church? We should confess the fact, but deny the conclusion. The fact that the Greek word here translated "servant" is the same that is elsewhere translated by the word "deacon" does not prove that we should now appoint deaconesses, for the scripture does not inform us what the qualifications of "deaconesses" must be. In 1 Timothy 3:8-12 we learn what the qualifications of deacons, and their wives, must be, but we do not read in any part of the Sacred Text about the qualifications of a deaconess. Moreover, the word here translated servant is a general term, and means "one who renders service to another, an attendant, servant." And in Matthew 20:28 the Savior applied it to himself. In view of all this we should not, on the basis of this verse, contend for deaconesses in the church. The elders of every church should feel at liberty., by reason of their position as elders, to inform a sister what she should do in regard to waiting on female candidates for baptism, or to do anything else which a sister in the church should do. An elder's wife., or a deacon's wife, might be regarded as the most appropriate one to attend to such affairs if she is the most capable, and her circumstances permit her so to do. But if not, then the elders of the church are at liberty to name someone else, and those who are named, if they be true Christians, will endeavor to do their best in doing that which they are requested to do. Sisters in a church can, in many

ways, be servants of the church without special appointment to any official position.

What is revealed in the 3rd verse? It should be read in connection with Acts 18:1, 2. Aquila and his wife were at Rome when Paul wrote his letter to the brethren there, but, at a later date, they were at Corinth, in Greece, and in Acts 18:2 we are informed of the reason for their change from Rome.

And what may we say of the 5th verse? It reveals that Aquila and his wife were true disciples, for they had a congregation to meet in their house. This is always an excellent evidence of true discipleship. All who are wholehearted Christians are so much interested in the regular worship of God through Christ that they will try to have a congregation, however small it may be, to meet in their own house, if they cannot find a place that is more suitable than a private house generally is for a place of meeting. What may we say of those who do not try to establish a place of worship, but drift from place to place and become so discouraged that they neglect the worship because they have not a meeting-house, or cannot conveniently go to a place of true worship? All such persons lack true discipleship, and they will learn, when too late for repentance, that their mistake is fatal. But what should we say to those men who inform us that they cannot say anything in public, and cannot lead a meeting? We should say to them that if they should be condemned to be hanged by the neck until they would be dead, if they would not learn to lead a meeting, they would certainly make an effort to learn to do so, and their effort would be a success. Then we should say to them that the Savior will not pronounce them “good and faithful” servants if they will not be faithful.

What may we learn by considering the 16th verse of this chapter? In it we find mention made of “a holy kiss,” and of “the churches of Christ.” The “kiss” was a social custom then, even as it is now, and Paul, as an apostle, desired to regulate it in the church at Rome. Therefore he commanded the “saints” there to “salute one another with a holy kiss.” This command did not create the custom of kissing, but it was intended to regulate it where it existed. The same is true of the command, “Honor the king.” See 1 Peter 2:17. Peter's command, in that instance, did not create the political custom of having a “king” as a civil ruler, but it was intended to regulate Christians with reference to such custom wherever it ex-

isted. In view of this Christians should not insist on having a king when they live in a republic, nor should they insist on saluting one another with a kiss when they live in a community where the kiss is not a social custom. Christians should consider that Paul did not command “the holy kiss,” as some suppose who advocate the kiss as an ordinance, but he simply commanded “a holy kiss.” In other words, Paul did not write of saluting with “a kiss” as he did when he used the definite expressions, “the communion the Lord's table,” and the “ Lord's supper.” See 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:20.

With these considerations before our minds we can clearly understand that those who contend for kissing as an ordinance in the church, even as “the communion,” or “the Lord's supper” is an ordinance, certainly make a mistake. In all places where the custom is to greet with a kiss this scripture commands that the “kiss” shall be “holy,” but where the custom of greeting with a kiss is not established, Paul does not command that it shall be established.

What may we say about the expression “churches of Christ”? It is an expression which indicates what the name of the New Testament Church should be, so that it may be distinguished from all other churches. The plural form—“churches of Christ”—embraces the singular, and, therefore, “church of Christ” is the right name for a congregation of Christians wherever it exists. Such a congregation should not be designated “Disciple church,” “ Christian church Brethren church,” “Baptist church,” nor by any other name that is humanly arranged. A house may be designated by the material of which it is built, but such a designation honors the material rather than the builder or owner. The same is true of the Church. If it is called “Christian church” because it is composed of Christians, then the material of which the house is builded is more honored than the builder and the owner. But Paul says, in Hebrews 3:3, that “he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house.” Therefore as Christ is the builder of his Church (Matthew 16:18), it should be named after him, and not after the material of which it is composed. Then let the Church, wherever found, be designated “Church of Christ.” That name is authorized by the verse under consideration, also by Hebrews 3:3. Moreover, the name “Church of Christ” is in harmony with all else that is found in the Sacred Text on the subject. The name “Church of God” is also authorized, and so is the name “Church of the First Born.”

See I Corinthians 1:2, and Hebrews 12:23. But the name “Church of Christ” is preferable to all other names because it does not need any explanation, and has not been adopted by any sectarian body, as the names “Church of God” and “Church of the First Born” have been. Certain compromised disciples have chosen the name “churches of Christ,” but know they do not deserve it.

And what may we say of the exhortation set forth in the 17th and 18th verses of this chapter? These verses indicate that all sectarians and innovators from the beginning of Roman Catholics down to the last of Christian church innovationists are all under condemnation. They have all caused divisions and offenses “contrary to the doctrine” set forth in the New Testament, or they have assisted in the continuance of the divisions that have been formed by the introduction of doctrines and devices “contrary to the doctrine” of Christ. If Bible readers could not find anything else in the Sacred Text against innovators, yet these verses should be sufficient to enable them to understand that all who introduce unauthorized things into the worship or work of the New Testament Church are condemnable characters. The same is true of all those who introduce that which naturally or logically results in such divisions as are “contrary to the doctrine” of Christ. There are divisions which are in harmony with that “doctrine,” and these are lawful, such as dividing the church from the world. Christ declared that he came not to send peace, “but a sword,” which means division. See Matthew 10:34-36. Therefore division, when it is made according to the doctrine of Christ, is right, but woe to those who “cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine” of Christ. They are not servants of Christ, but serve their own appetites or earthward ambitions, and “by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts” of those who are not informed, and thus are “simple” in regard to the deceptive end which the divisive characters have in view.

What is set forth for our learning in the 19th verse? We find here a statement concerning the extent to which the obedience of the saints at Rome had become known to mankind, and of Paul's rejoicing by reason thereof, and then we find an expression of Paul concerning them in regard to both good and evil. This is followed by an assurance of their supremacy over Satan which God would give them at an early date.

What is indicated in the 23rd verse? The indication is that a Christian call be an officer in a civil government, for

Erastus is here classed with Christians, and he was an officer called “Chamberlain,” which means “manager of a household, public steward, treasurer.”

And what may we say of the benediction which Paul expressed in the conclusion of this letter? We may say that it offers to us the information that the Gospel was a “mystery” before it was revealed, but since it has been “made manifest,” or made known, it is not a mystery as it once was. Is not everything a mystery until it is made known? It is. The letters of the alphabet are a mystery to every one that does not know them in their relations to each other and to the language of which they are the elements. Thus it is with all else that may be mentioned. It is a mystery while it is not understood. But when it is revealed, made plain, and understood, then it is not a mystery any longer. In view of this, what should we say to those who declare that the Gospel is still a “mystery”? We should say to them that the Gospel is plainly set forth in the New Testament in its manward bearings, and all who desire to understand and obey it may do so.

And now, what may we say in conclusion concerning this letter, as a document? It is strongly argumentative, and largely hortative. That is to say, it consists chiefly of arguments and exhortations. It was intended for the edification and comfort of the “saints” at Rome, also to enable them *to understand, confute, and, if possible, convince the un-Christian Jews and Gentiles, by whom they were surrounded. In style it is a model for all who would speak or write on controverted questions. It supposes objections and discusses them. It is worthy of the Holy Spirit as its author, and of Paul as its writer.

FIRST CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER I

What saith the scripture which is now before us? It saith, in general, that the Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church at Corinth, and to all others “who call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” Then it saith, in particular, that Paul thanked God in behalf of the church in Corinth for the “grace of God” given to its members, and explained what he meant by the word “grace” as he applied it to them. Next we learn that the scripture here offered to us saith that Christ would confirm those, whom Paul addressed in this letter, and that God is faithful. This is followed by an exhortation to oneness in regard to speech and conduct, and in thought, with a rebuke for the divisions which Paul had been informed then existed in the church at Corinth. The latter part of this chapter sets forth a revelation concerning the Gospel, and God's reason for choosing ignorant men to preach it.

What is referred to in the 5th, 6th and 7th verses of this chapter? The 12th chapter of the letter now under consideration informs us that reference is here made to the special gifts which were imparted by the Holy Spirit to many persons in the New Testament Church. This does not mean that all persons who were thus gifted have received all of the mentioned gifts, but that those gifts were distributed among them. See chapter 12:8-10.

What was the divine purpose in bestowing special gifts on members of the New Testament Church? Chapter 12:7 indicates that one purpose was for the “profit” of the members of that Church, and chapter 14:22 indicates that the purpose of one of those gifts was to convince unbelievers. Is there any evidence that those gifts were not divinely intended to continue? There is. See chapter 13:8. What should we say to those who declare that the gifts we are now considering ceased to be imparted only because of disobedience on the part of church members? We should say that they “do err not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” The Apostle Paul did not intimate that the special gifts should cease because of disobedience, but 414

rather that they should cease when the perfected revelation would have been fully given. See chapter 13:10. Those gifts were as a scaffold to the new building, which is taken down when the building is finished. They were necessary to establish the Church among the Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles, and were necessary before the truth, which God intended for the Church, had been fully revealed. But when the Church, which is “the pillar and ground of the truth,” had been established, among the chief nationalities, and the truth for that Church to uphold had been given in its completeness and perfection, then those gifts ceased by divine limitation, and not because of human disobedience.

What is meant by the declaration, “God is faithful,” as set forth in the 9th verse? Psalm 89:33, 34 give us information on this subject. It means, God is constant.

What may we say of Paul's exhortation to unity, or oneness, as set forth in the 10th verse of this chapter? It is in perfect harmony with the Savior's prayer, as recorded in John 17:20-23. What should we say to those who declare that it is impossible for Christians to be united as Paul here exhorts? We should say to them that Paul, as an inspired man, did not require the saints at Corinth to do that which was impossible for them. Then we should make mention of an unabridged dictionary, and show that it is possible for all who accept it as their standard in regard to spelling, pronouncing, and defining words, to “speak the same thing,” and “be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment,” with reference to orthography, pronunciation and definition. Finally, we should inquire whether a man is wiser than God, or more benevolent than God. If this inquiry be properly answered, then we can enforce the conclusion that God is wise enough, and good enough, to give to his people a book on which they can all be united, and that he has actually given them such a book. Therefore, we must conclude that all who desire so to do may obey the exhortation to unity that we are now considering.

What was Paul's estimate of the divisions among the saints at Corinth? They were an evidence of carnality. See chapter 3:1-4. And what were those saints divided over? They were divided over men, or their preferences for the names of certain men. What may we say of professed Christians who are now divided over men, and are wearing humanly given names? They are “carnal,” or fleshly minded.

What is indicated in the 17th verse of this chapter? The

indication here is that Paul's mission was to preach the Gospel, and that it was more important than to baptize persons. Then the intimation is that others had baptized persons in Corinth. This intimation is confirmed by Acts 18:8-10. "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized," while Paul was at Corinth, and as he baptized but few of them the intimation is, that he must have committed the work of baptizing into the hands of others. This intimation is so strong that it may be regarded as an unavoidable conclusion.

What should we say to those who say that Paul baptized certain persons, and afterwards found that it was wrong, and quit baptizing? We should press them for the scripture which thus declares, or implies, or intimates. If they refer to the 17th verse of this chapter, we should insist that they should read and study the 14th and 15th verses, in which Paul declares that he thanked God that he had not baptized many of the Corinthians, and gave as a reason, lest any should say that he had baptized in his "own name." Besides, the 13th verse implies that as Paul had not been crucified for the Corinthians, and they had not been baptized in his name, therefore, they should not call themselves after his name. This indicates that followers of Christ should not call themselves after the name ' of any one who has not been crucified for them, and into whose name they have not been baptized. It also intimates that all humanly given names for the followers of Christ are improper.

What may we learn by considering the latter part of the 17th verse? We may learn that "the wisdom of words," or "enticing words of man's wisdom," should not be used in preaching the Gospel because of the evil effect that it will have on those who are led to believe the Gospel under such preaching. See also chapter 2:4, 5. What effect should this have on Gospel preachers? It should cause them to confine themselves to the good news of salvation, and to set it forth in a plain manner. But does this mean that they should disregard the correct use of words, and speak in a blundering manner? It does not. 2 Timothy 2:15; Titus 2:8 are against all incorrectness in speech.

Why is "the preaching of the cross" foolishness to them that perish? Acts 17:18, 32 give us an indication of the reason. Certain men, at Athens, who were wise in their own conceits, spoke of Paul as a "babbler," and some of those who heard him speak of the resurrection of Christ "mocked." They were so exalted in their own estimation,

or satisfied with their own ideas, that they were disposed to become mockers when they heard a doctrine that they did not believe. This is the reason that “the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” It is beneath their standard of value, or beneath the standard by which they measure. Thus it is as “foolishness” to a man who loves money to turn from the things of this world and become a Christian, and “foolishness” to a seeker of pleasure to turn from pleasurable enjoyment to follow Christ.

What may we say of the 19th and 20th verses? They set forth the declarations which are discussed in the remainder of this chapter. In Isaiah 44:24, 25 we find declarations of Jehovah concerning his wisdom, and its superiority over the wisdom of men, in regard to the things of this life, and here we find declarations, concerning that wisdom, which are applied to God's provision for man's spiritual welfare as made known in the Gospel. All human philosophy, and human wisdom, of every kind, are as foolishness when exercised in religion as substitutes for divine revelation. Romans 1:22, 23 inform us of that which human wisdom has done, and will do, when adopted instead of God's revelation. Human wisdom suggested to the ancients, generally, that the God of heaven and earth should not be glorified by them, but that they should forget him, and should make, or imagine, gods of their own. Thus it was that heathenism was established, and even the divine judgments, as recorded in the 8th and 9th chapters of John's vision, will not be sufficient to cause it to cease. The gospel of Christ as preached by the Apostles, and by those who learned it of them, disturbed heathenism, and might have overthrown it entirely, had it not been for the ambition for power, on the part of the bishops of many churches, and their disposition to speculate rather than to be guided by divine testimony. As a result the Gospel was suffered to decline, and be banished from the hearts of the people in Asia and Africa, and it was only retained in Europe in documentary form.

What may we learn by considering the remainder of this chapter? The 21st verse informs us of that which God was pleased to do for the salvation of mankind when by their own wisdom they did not know him. This verse does not mean that he proposed to save believers by foolish preaching, nor by the preaching of foolishness, nor by foolish preachers, but by sensible, humble, men, preaching the gospel of Christ, which, in the estimation of those who were puffed with worldly wisdom, would be foolishness. The

22nd verse declares that the Jews sought “a sign.” Their nation had received signs, in times past, and they became sign-seekers. As such they represent all those who have, in the Gospel Age, been seekers for signs in some sound, some sight, some feeling, some vision, or dream, and by reason thereof they have disregarded the Gospel as revealed in the New Testament. In this verse we find the declaration also that the Greeks were seekers of wisdom. As such they represent all those, in the Gospel Age, who pretend to be learned, and, on that account, disregard the Gospel, or show that they are not satisfied with its simplicity as revealed in the New Testament.

But have not the sign-seekers, and the wisdom-seekers, generally, been combined in the Gospel Age? Yes, and the outworkings of the disposition to be wise above what is divinely recorded, and to have signs that the Lord did not promise to give, may be seen in the literature of Romanists, and all sectarian Protestants. In Romanism, a record of external signs predominates, while in sectarian Protestantism a record of internal signs, or emotions, predominates. At the same time Protestants, generally, try to imitate Rome in making an external show.

What did the doctrine of “Christ crucified,” as preached by the Apostles, seem to the sign-seekers, and to the wisdom-seekers? To the former it was a “stumbling-block,” and to the latter it was “foolishness.” And what is the Gospel in its simplicity and purity, when preached to both Romish and Protestant sectarians? It seems to be to them both a “stumbling-block” and “foolishness,” if we may judge by the manner in which they, generally, turn from it, and despise those who preach it.

Has God ever done anything which may be justly designated “foolishness”? No. But when he chose ignorant men to preach the Gospel he did what the world would designate foolishness, even as when he proposed to save the world by the gospel of Christ.

But why did God choose ignorant men to preach the Gospel? In order that “no flesh should glory in his presence.” That is to say, in order that those who would preach the Gospel might not say that their learning, and their wisdom, had recommended the Gospel, and in order that infidels might be prevented from supposing that the success of the Gospel was the result of human learning. For this reason ignorant men were chosen to be the first preachers, and Christ sent upon them, and into them, the Holy Spirit, by

whose power he was made unto them “wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.”

But was not Saul of Tarsus a learned man? He was. And did not Christ call him to the Apostleship? He did. But in the first part of the 2nd chapter of the letter we are now considering Paul informs us that he did not use his learning when he preached the Gospel, but preached “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” The last verse of this chapter indicates the divine purpose in choosing ignorant men to preach the Gospel, and in not suffering the learned man that he called to use his learning. That purpose is expressed in these words: “He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.” God and Christ do not divide honors with man, nor with any other being.” I am the Lord, that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” (Isaiah 42:8.) This being true God will not give the praise of his Church to colleges, nor to any other human devices.

CHAPTER II

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed concerning Paul's preaching at Corinth, and, then, concerning the wisdom that he spoke to a certain class, also the result of ignorance in “the princes of this world” concerning that wisdom. Next we find mention made of that “which God hath prepared for them that love him,” and mention made of the fact that those things have been revealed by “the Spirit which is of God.” The difference between “the natural man” and “he that is spiritual” is also mentioned. The chapter is ended with an intimation that God's mind is not known by any one, and that he is not to be instructed by man, and this is followed by the declaration that the Apostles have “the mind of Christ.”

What does Paul declare concerning himself in the first part of this chapter? He declares that when he went to Corinth he did not go with “excellency of speech or of wisdom,” but “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” He also declares that he was with the Corinthians “in weakness, and in fear and in much trembling,” but that he was “determined not to know any thing among” them “save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” By what purpose was he actuated? The 5th verse informs us that his purpose was that their “faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” What effect should that purpose, as thus expressed, have had on all preachers of

the Gospel who have lived since Paul wrote it? That purpose should have prevented them from all attempts to proclaim the Gospel with excellency of human speech or of human wisdom, and should have held them to the divine testimony at all times and in all circumstances. Thus it should have been; thus it should now be; and thus it should continue till the end of time.

What may we learn by considering the 6th, 7th and 8th verses? We may learn that when Paul spoke to those who were advanced in divine knowledge he spoke “the wisdom of God,” but “not the wisdom of this world.” In other words, when Paul was among those who could appreciate what he would say he spoke “the hidden wisdom which God ordained before unto our glory.” What that “hidden wisdom” is we may judge from the 8th verse, which indicates that it consisted of God's purposes in regard to Christ, for if “the princes of this world”—the chief priest and rulers of the Jews, and Pilate—had known those purposes they would not have crucified Christ.

What may we say of the 9th, 10th and 11th verses of this chapter? The 9th verse informs us that “the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” are beyond the sight, the hearing, and the thought of man. Certainly God's plan to save mankind, through the life and death of his Son, is altogether above and beyond man's mind to conceive or comprehend. “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit,” Paul declares of the things God hath prepared for Christians, and then informs us that “the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” Having made mention of the mystery which the Spirit of God knows, Paul illustrates by the fact that the spirit of man knows its own secrets.

And what of the 12th and 13th verses? The 12th verse declares that Paul had not received “the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God,” and then declares that the end in view was that he “might know the things that are freely given . . . of God.” In the 13th verse he declares that he spoke those things that were given to him “not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” Here is verbal inspiration taught in the clearest possible manner, for the declaration here is not only that “the things of God,” or thoughts of God, were revealed to Paul, but that he set forth those thoughts in “the words” which the Holy Spirit taught. Over seventy times Moses declared in his writings, “The

Lord spake unto Moses, saying.” Many times certain Old Testament prophets said, “The word of the Lord came unto me, saying.” And here Paul declares that he spoke “in the words” which the Holy Spirit taught. Thus it is that the Bible comes to us. Its chief writers declared the divine origin of their thoughts, and of the very words that they used in expressing those thoughts. Paul's inspiration was so clear and definite that when he wished to write beyond that which the Lord commanded he knew the very word with which the divine command ended, and the very word with which it began. See chapter 7:6, 10, 12.

What is meant by the expression “comparing spiritual things with spiritual,” as recorded in the last part of the 13th verse? The former part of that verse indicates the meaning. “Spiritual things,” or thoughts, were spoken in “spiritual” words, and not in words which man's wisdom teacheth. The Greek word here translated “comparing” means “to combine, compound; to compare, to estimate by comparing with something else, or, to match, to explain, illustrate, to suit.” In view of such shades of meaning the explanation just given is evidently correct. The Holy Spirit “combined” spiritual thoughts and spiritual words, or “suited” spiritual words to spiritual thoughts, even as the first part of the verse under consideration plainly declares.

What is indicated in the 14th verse? The “natural man” mentioned in this verse is the carnal, or animal, man. The meaning of the Greek word here translated “natural” is, “occupied with mere animal things, animal, sensual.” The indication is that the fleshly body does not appreciate spiritual things. If a man is physically hungry he cannot be fed on thought, but he needs physical, or material, food. A book is “foolishness” to the appetite of the body. Therefore, all those who consider water baptism and the Lord's supper, from a material viewpoint, regard them as a formality, or sham. They could see some sense in a bath for cleansing the body, and in a full meal for the bodily appetite. But they cannot see any sense in being immersed and immediately brought out of the water ' nor in eating a crumb of bread and drinking a few drops of grape-juice.

But from a spiritual viewpoint baptism in water and the Lord's supper are institutions of divine wisdom.

What may we say to those who have concluded that the expression “natural man” in this verse refers to the “unconverted man”? They are wrong. The Greek word for

“natural” in this text forbids such a conclusion. And what shall we say of those who declare that the word “natural,” in this verse, means the “uninspired man”? Such a declaration is wrong, as may be seen by an examination of the Greek text. Besides, if the word “natural” means “uninspired,” then the word “spiritual” would mean “inspired,” and that would make havoc of the Sacred Text. See Galatians 6:1. Moreover, the church at Corinth was highly gifted. See chapter 1:7. Yet Paul could not speak to that church “as unto spiritual.” See chapter 3:1. Therefore the word “spiritual” in the verse under consideration cannot mean either the “converted man,” as such, nor the “inspired man,” as such.

The word “spiritual” is used, in this verse, in contrast with “natural,” in the preceding verse, and, therefore, is used in contrast with the bodily, or fleshly, or animal man, and must refer simply and strictly to the spirit of man that has been led to obey, and continues to obey, the Gospel. Such a man is “spiritual” because his spirit is under the control of the Spirit of God, as that Spirit speaks through the Gospel. The full idea then is this: The spirit of every Christian judges all things by the divine word, yet that spirit is not judged by any one else because there is not any one else that knows what is thought of a Christian's spirit, or a Christian's real spiritual condition. See 11th verse. The last verse is a continuance of the thought expressed in the 15th verse. It intimates that there is not any one who has “known the mind of the Lord,” and, therefore, there is not any one who “may instruct him.” The declaration of Paul, “But we have the mind of Christ,” informs us of the end which inspiration had in view. It was to give to the inspired ones the mind, or thought, of Christ, and thus to enable them to make known the will of Christ to mankind.

CHAPTER III

What may we safely say of the teaching set forth in this chapter? The Apostle Paul here sets forth the divided condition of the church at Corinth, which condition existed by reason of preferences for certain preachers, and then he rebuked those that had such preferences. In so doing he showed that the preachers of Christ who then proclaimed the Gospel were laborers together with God, and were not to be gloried in, for they were only instruments in God's hands to accomplish his ends. He showed also that to misname the temple of God was to “defile” it, and that this

would result in the destruction of those guilty of misnaming it.

What may we learn by considering the first part of this chapter? We may learn that for the baptized believers at Corinth to call themselves after Paul and Apollos was a mark of carnality, or fleshly-mindedness, also that Paul and Apollos were as nothing when compared with God. All Bible readers should learn from this that those professed Christians who designate themselves by humanly given names are carnally-minded professors.

But may not religious people choose any name they wish to be known by? Yes, God suffers them to do so. But he declares that for his people to choose humanly-given names is an indication of carnality. Therefore, those who desire to be God's people should avoid calling themselves by all humanly-given names. The New Testament sets forth the names which God's people, in the Gospel Age, should wear. Those Christians, who designate themselves by humanly given names, show that they are "carnal," show that they wish names that are "not anything," and show that they do not fear the threat that God will "destroy" those who "defile the temple of God." See verses 3, 7, 17.

What is the teaching found in the 9th verse of this chapter? The teaching is that the inspired preachers were "laborers together with God," and that the Church was God's field, or building, in which those preachers labored. If the Church was considered as a field, then the inspired preachers were considered as those who planted the seed, and watered it, while God gave the increase. If the Church was considered as a building, then the inspired preachers were considered as builders. Having written of the Church as a "building" Paul then wrote of himself "as a wise master builder," and of what he had done by way of laying "the foundation," while some one else built thereon. Next he wrote of the foundation he had laid, as the only "foundation," and which consisted of Christ, as set forth in the Gospel.

What may we learn by considering the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th verses? We may learn that the various classes of mankind to which the Gospel would be preached should be regarded as like unto six kinds of material, namely, "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble." Three of these kinds of material will endure fire, while the others will not. This was mentioned to illustrate that certain classes of those who would, in the Gospel Age, make a profession

of Christ, would endure trials, while others would not. In view of this the precaution found in the last of the 10th verse should be heeded. Paul said of the true foundation, "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

But what is meant by the declaration that the builder shall be saved, yet "so as by fire"? The meaning is not that he shall be saved regardless of character, but that he shall be tried by the same "fiery trials" (1 Peter 4:12) which shall test his work.

In view of all this, what may we safely say of all use of sensational methods of preaching and persuading, in order to induce men and women to make a profession of Christ? We may say that such methods are wrong, and should be discouraged by all churches of Christ, as well as by all preachers of the Gospel. Multitudes of mankind are emotional, and, as a result, are easily persuaded if they are excited. All such should be carefully taught, without excitement. When they become informed of their duty they should be exhorted to obey the Savior in order to become Christians. Thus the emotional temperaments should not be excited by sensational methods of preaching and exhorting, and those who are not emotional should not be trifled with by such methods, for they are liable to become disgusted by them.

What is set forth in the 16th and 17th verses of this chapter? The question found in the 16th verse implies that Christians are "the temple of God," and that he dwells in this temple by "the Spirit" that dwells in Christians. Then, the 17th verse declares that those will be destroyed who "defile" this temple. The Greek word here translated "defile" means "spoil, ruin, corrupt, deprave." In view of these several shades of meaning we learn that God will "destroy" all those who "spoil," or "ruin," or "corrupt," or "deprave" the Church which consists of Christians. But is not a church corrupted when it is incorrectly named? It is. A church may be corrupted in name as well as in doctrine, or practice. The name of a church is a part of its doctrine, when spoken of in strictness of speech. What will become of all innovators, who, by urging human devices on congregations of disciples, succeed in spoiling, raining, corrupting, or depraving, them? They will be destroyed.

What is set forth in the 18th, 19th and 20th verses? First of all, an exhortation, or warning, against deception is set forth, then against depending on worldly wisdom, and then

in favor of humility in order to become wise. The declaration that “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” is next set forth, and then evidence of God's superiority to man is set forth in two quotations from the Old Testament.

What is the ending of this chapter? It ends with a statement of Paul's conclusion from what he had presented against glorying in men, and a statement of additional reasons against glorying in men. Those additional reasons, are that “all things” were intended for the benefit of the Church, also that the Church belongs to Christ, and Christ is of God. Thus it was that Paul, as an inspired man, reasoned against certain members of the church at Corinth calling themselves after the names of men' and, thereby, showing that they gloried in men. Such reasoning should cause all Christians to tremble at the thought of wearing humanly-given names as religious designations. The divinely given names should not be adopted by those who are not Christians, but all who are Christians should certainly wear the divinely given names. Mankind should first become Christians, and then they should wear the names which Christ has given to Christians, and those names they should wear without addition, subtraction, modification, or change, of any kind.

CHAPTER IV

“What saith the scripture,” as recorded in this chapter? The scripture, as here recorded, first of all, says to us that Paul exhorted the church of God at Corinth to regard preachers as “stewards of the mysteries of God,” then he mentioned that stewards are required to be “faithful,” and then he wrote of judging. Next we learn of the scripture here recorded that Paul referred to himself and Apollos as figures in order to teach the Corinthians not to think of men above what is written, nor to be puffed up for one against another. Having introduced the question of differences between men he ascribed those differences to God, and thereby showed that all boasting is wrong. Next we find a statement of the exalted condition of the church at Corinth ' and of the lowly condition of the Apostles. Paul then stated why he thus wrote to the Corinthians, and he sought them to be followers of him. To this he added that “for this cause” he had sent Timothy to them, who would inform them of his “ways.” The chapter is ended with *declarations* concerning those who were “puffed up,” in the

church at Corinth, and intimated that he might visit them with a “rod.”

What is the meaning of the word “steward,” as found in the first verse of this chapter? The first meaning of the Greek word here translated by the word “steward” is “the manager of a household,” but in a spiritual sense it means “the one who holds a commission” in the service of the Gospel. In view of this, Paul enjoined, or exhorted, that he and other Gospel preachers should be regarded as “the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” Then he stated that “it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.” This statement touches the question of judging a man to be faithful, and having touched this question Paul declared that it was “a very small thing” that he should be judged of “man's judgment,” and stated that he did not judge his “own self,” likewise that he did not know anything by himself, but that the Lord judged him. Then he exhorted the Corinthians to wait for the Lord's judgment, which “will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.”

What is referred to in the 6th verse? Reference is made to “the figure” of speech, or illustration, that is used in the 6th verse of the preceding chapter. When Paul said that he had planted and Apollos had watered he used a figure, and then declared that God gave “the increase.” Next he declared, “So then neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.” Thus it was that Paul endeavored to show that the Corinthians should not think of men above that which was and is written.

What effect should such teaching have had on all Christians? It should have been sufficient to have prevented the apostasy which originated in the exaltation of men above that which was written. The Diocesan bishops, the Metropolitan bishops, the Patriarchs, and finally, the Pope, all were the outgrowth of regarding men above that which was written. The same is true of all the bishops and pastors of sectarian Protestantism.

What may we learn by considering the 7th verse of this chapter? The indication here is that God makes persons to differ from each other. We know that he does this, in some degree, through nature, and in the New Testament we learn that he did this in bestowing special gifts that were different. See chapter 12:8-11. But as special gifts have ceased, as chapter 13:8 indicates, does God still cause

persons to differ from each other? Yes. By nature, and circumstances, all of which are under the control of his providence, he still causes them to differ. And does this exclude all reason for boasting, or self-gratulation? It does. On what basis then is man accountable? He is accountable before God on the basis of his opportunity to learn the Bible, and his capacity to receive, and retain, and use its teachings. That is to say, mankind are morally responsible before God according to the spiritual light which they are permitted to have, and which they profess to have. See Luke 12:47, 48; John 9:41. The moral light which mankind really have makes them responsible, and that which they profess to have, but do not possess, likewise makes them responsible because their empty profession prevents them from accepting the real light which may be offered to them.

What is indicated in the 8th verse, and onward to the end of the 13th? The easy and exalted condition of the church at Corinth, and the impoverished and persecuted condition of the Apostles, we find here indicated. That church was in easy circumstances, and was highly gifted, spiritually. But while that church was favorably situated Paul and other Apostles were poor and were persecuted. Does that state of affairs still exist? It does in many places. Members of the church are, in many instances, rich, in the things of this world, while preachers of Christ are afflicted with poverty. Besides, if preachers do their full duty they are often persecuted to the utmost that the laws of the land will suffer, while many churches, as such, are not exposed to persecution. Thus it has been; thus it is; and thus it will be.

What is indicated in the 15th verse? The difference between one who leads persons to obey the Gospel, and one who afterwards teaches them, is here indicated. Paul had planted the church at Corinth. See Acts 18:1-11. The means by which persons are brought into the relationship of "sons" is also indicated. Paul declared, "I have begotten you through the Gospel." And what may we learn by this declaration of Paul? We may learn that by the same means persons are now brought into the relationship of "sons," and this implies that the Gospel should be regarded as the only means by which that end can be accomplished. But may not other means be used as a drawing power? No. Matthew 5:16 and John 12:32 settle this question. In view of this, what may we say of all human devices that are arranged to draw persons to hear the Gos-

pel? They are worse than vanity, and result in degrading the Gospel in the estimation of sensible people.

Did Paul desire that the Corinthian brethren should be followers of him in every respect? In chapter 11:1 Paul guarded that which he wrote in regard to following him, though he, evidently, tried to be an exemplar in all respects. Yes, and in the last part of the 17th verse he used the expression “my ways which be in Christ.” Therefore, he desired his brethren to follow him, as he followed Christ.

Did Paul write as if he would be able to test “the power” of them that were “puffed up”? He did, and did not seem to think that he was guilty of egotism in thus writing.

Paul ended this chapter, as we find it here marked off, by asking a significant question. In that question he intimated that he would go to the church at Corinth and exercise severity if those who were wrong-doers would not repent before he would go there. And who were the wrong-doers whom he threatened? The next chapter indicates that they consisted, partly, of a man who had been guilty of the crime known as “fornication,” also those who were “puffed up” over what he had done.

CHAPTER V

Of what do we read in this chapter? We read of the first, and only, individual case of church discipline which is brought to our notice in the New Testament.

What was the offense of the one who deserved to be disciplined? It is spoken of as “fornication,” and consisted of a son taking “his father's wife” to be his own wife. The woman thus taken must have been some other wife of his father than the mother of the fornicator here mentioned. The silence of the scriptures suggests this conclusion. But the father seems to have been living, for the woman spoken of was a “wife” and not a widow. The indication, therefore, is that a son took his father's wife away from him, and others in the church seemed to think that he had done something shrewd, and were “puffed up” over it.

What is set forth in the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses? Paul's interest in the case of the fornicator to whom he referred, and the method of procedure that should be adopted in dealing with him, we find here set forth.

What is indicated in the 5th verse? The meaning of exclusion from the church is indicated. It means that such as are excluded from the church, upon a just charge, are de-

livered unto Satan, and that the end in view is the “destruction of the flesh,” or of the fleshly inclinations, in order that “the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus,” or in the day of final accounts. But how can church discipline, even when thus inflicted, tend to destroy the flesh and save the spirit? The answer is this: The man who was guilty of fornication was on the side of Satan and deserved to be delivered to him so that he might see his condition and be led to repent, and thereby accomplish in himself the end that is mentioned in Romans 6:6. This has often been the result of a proper exercise of church discipline. When the offender has been withdrawn from he has, in some instances, repented, and brought his body under control.

In the light of the 4th and 5th verses, what may we say to those who do not believe in public discipline? We may say to them that they should repent of their error. But should public discipline be exercised on the Lord's day? Every church must decide for itself, but if a special meeting is announced for the purpose of considering discipline the church will, generally, find that the exercise of discipline will be much more satisfactory to both the congregation and the offenders, than if taken up on the Lord's day. When an offender has been overtaken in a fault, and is willing to confess it, then that one may come forward in answer to an invitation, or of his, or her, own accord come forward on Lord's day. After due explanation has been made, by the one who is presiding on the occasion, then the offender may make the full confession and ask the forgiveness of the congregation, or the one who presides may take the offender by the hand and ask, “Do you acknowledge that you have done wrong, and that you are sorry for it, and ask the forgiveness of the church at this place?” Such a question is like the inquiry made of an alien sinner concerning faith in Christ. A sinner might arise and say, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” without any inquiry on the subject. But we, generally, embrace the confession in a question, and we may do the same in regard to offenders against the church.

What may we learn by considering the 6th, 7th and 8th verses? We may learn that to keep one bad character in the church will result in others becoming bad, and that the only safe plan for a church, that would keep itself pure, is to “purge out, therefore, the old leaven.” What is true in regard to bad characters is also true concerning false doctrines, or of a true doctrine, wrongly applied. See

Galatians 5:1-9. Therefore, bad characters, and false doctrines, and wrong applications of true doctrines, should all be purged out of the church.

What is referred to by the words, “with such an one, no not to eat,” as recorded in the last of the 11th verse? Reference is made to eating at a private table with “such an one,” or at any other place where we can control the circumstances. This is indicated by the word “company,” as found in this verse, especially when considered in connection with 2 Thessalonians 3:14. The end in view is that such an offender “may be ashamed,” and not because it is a sin for Christians to eat with such a character. Therefore Christians should not make themselves ridiculous by refusing to eat with the kind of character that Paul mentions, when placed with him at the table of a neighbor, or of a brother, who does not know, or does not care, about that one's character. That which Paul here enjoins is for the benefit of the offender, and not for our salvation.

What is implied by the questions found in the 12th verse? The first implication is that the Apostle Paul was not required to judge those that were on the outside of the church. The second. implication is that the church had the right to judge those that were connected with it, and, thus, had the right to discipline them. Then we read in the next verse that “them that are without God judgeth,” and that the brethren at Corinth were commanded to “put away” from among themselves “that wicked person” who had taken his father's wife. This implies that all other churches should “put away” from among themselves all wicked persons who pretend to have membership with them.

CHAPTER VI

What is here recorded for our learning? The Holy Spirit's teaching, through the Apostle Paul, in regard to Christians going to law with each other, and what they should suffer rather than to take their differences into the civil courts. Next we find declarations in regard to the characters that should not enter the kingdom of heaven, the characters that the Corinthians were before they became Christians, and the change that the Gospel had made in them. Next we are informed concerning the difference between lawfulness and expediency, and then the subject of spiritual fornication is introduced, and this is illustrated by reference to the fleshly marriage of a man to a woman. Fleshly fornication

is then condemned, as a sin against a man's own body, and this is followed by a declaration concerning the sanctity of the bodies of Christians because the Spirit of God dwells in them, and they belong to God. The chapter is ended with an exhortation to the saints at Corinth to glorify God in their bodies and their spirits, which are God's.

What may we learn by considering the 2nd and 3rd verses of this chapter? We may learn that the saints are to judge the world, and even to judge angels. But how are the saints to judge the world and even angels? In Luke 11:31, 32 we are clearly informed. The Queen of Sheba will judge those who were not willing to hear the Savior, because she traveled a long distance to hear the wisdom of one who was not as great as the Savior. By so doing she showed her desire for wisdom, and, thereby, showed what a human being could do who desired to learn wisdom. The Jews, on the other hand, who rejected the Savior's words showed that they despised wisdom, and, thereby, they brought condemnation on themselves by the contrast they made between their conduct and that of the Queen of Sheba. The same is true in regard to the men of Nineveh. They repented at the preaching of one who was not as great as the Savior, and they, thereby, showed what human beings could do who were living in sin but were honest. That which they did will condemn, in the last day, those who heard the Savior, but refused to repent. On the same principle those who obey God illustrate what all others, unto whom the divine commands are offered, might do. In the final judgment the obedient ones will show that the disobedient will be without excuse for their disobedience. The obedient ones will also show that the angels who rebelled against God will be without excuse. If men and women, dwelling in the flesh, and surrounded by the allurements of this world, in addition to the devil's suggestions through his agents, could obey God, and be faithful to him, then all the fallen angels will be proved to have been without excuse in their rebellion against God. Thus it is that "the saints shall judge the world," and "shall judge angels."

What is indicated by the 4th verse? The indication is that the things of this world are of such little importance, when compared with spiritual matters, that the saints could afford to have those "who are least esteemed in the church" to decide questions concerning such things. Besides, this verse intimates, and even implies, that a church may appoint one, or more, of its number, as a kind of committee,

to settle questions in regard to temporal affairs among its members.

What else may we learn by considering the record here given of a brother going to law with a brother? We may learn that those who did so were guilty of wrong, and that Christians should suffer themselves to be defrauded rather than to do so. Does this mean that Christians should not go to law at any time, nor in any circumstances? No. Paul appealed to Caesar (Acts 25:11), and that fact implies that Christians may appeal to civil courts to save their lives, and even to secure and defend their rights. This also implies that when “false brethren” try to rob the church of Christ, at any place, of its house of worship the church may defend itself in the civil courts. But does it imply that a church may bring a suit for such a purpose? Yes. Paul brought a suit when he appealed to Caesar. Yet churches, of Christ should bear in mind that when they bring a suit for church property before a civil court they are very likely to fail in their efforts to convince a judge that their cause is just. The questions between churches of Christ and their false brethren, who are heretics concerning the faith, are not generally understood by men of the world. Therefore, as a rule, the saints should not enter suits for church property. But if suits are entered against them they may, or may not, according to circumstances, decide that they should defend themselves. In many instances the cost of defending themselves will be greater than the value of the property for which the lawsuit is brought. Therefore, though the saints may have a scriptural right to bring a suit, and defend themselves against one, at any time, over church property, yet it may not often be expedient to do so.

What is set forth in the 9th, 10th and 11th verses of this chapter? An assurance that vile characters shall not inherit the kingdom of God is here set forth, likewise an assurance that the saints at Corinth were formerly numbered with such characters, but that they had been changed. And how were they changed? By being “justified,” is the answer. And how were they “justified”? “In the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God,” Paul informs us. But was their justification accomplished without obedience on their part? No. In Romans 5:1 we learn that the saints at Rome were justified by faith. But were they not justified by faith only, or faith without works? No. To believe in Christ, or have faith in him, is a work.

See John 6:28, 29. Besides, in James 2:14-26, we are in

formed that the doctrine of justification “by faith only” is a falsehood.

What may we learn by considering the 12th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the word “lawful” is of more extended meaning than the word “expedient,” in its application to Christians. The word “lawful” means “permitted by law,” while the word “expedient” means “proper under the circumstances.” Therefore, the eating of meats that had been offered to idols was “lawful” to the saints in the New Testament Church, but it was not “proper under the circumstances” when it was offensive to certain brethren. In view of the teaching set forth, in this 12th verse, what may we say of the use of instrumental music, missionary societies, funny lectures, and magic-lantern of Christ? They are “not expedient” because they are offensive to many disciples, and they are not lawful because they are not mentioned in the law of Christ as things permitted by that law. They are not on an equality with meats which God created. See 1 Timothy 4:3. This being true an organ has not the dignity of a swine, when viewed in the light of the New Testament, because an organ is a human device while a swine is a divine creation.

What then may be safely said of innovators among disciples of Christ? They do not advocate expediency, because they advocate things that are not mentioned in the law of Christ, and which are offensive to many other disciples. But may not the same be said of meeting-houses, of lights in them, of seats to sit on, and of fires in meeting-houses to dispel the cold in the cold season of the year? No. All of those arrangements are mentioned with approval in the divine record designated Acts of the Apostles. See Acts 2:2; 20:8; 28:3. Why then do innovating disciples proclaim that they believe in expediency, and that those who oppose their devices do not believe in it? Because, in their zeal for popularity, they have become reckless. Paul's idea of expediency was exclusive; theirs is inclusive. Paul's idea excluded certain things that were lawful, while theirs include certain things that are not lawful. Therefore, when measured by the verse now before us those disciples who proclaim themselves advocates of expediency are, in reality, advocates of inexpediency. Then, on the other hand, those whom they say do not believe in expediency are, in reality, the advocates of expediency. This being true, the position of innovating disciples concerning expediency is not true, but is the very reverse of truth.

What is set forth for our learning in the 13th, 14th and 15th verses of this chapter? We may here learn that Paul mentioned meats for the body, and that both meats and the body are transient, or intended for decay. Then he mentioned that the body of every Christian has a relation to Christ, and should not be joined to a harlot. In other words, Paul passed from the question of the body in its relation to flesh, that might be eaten, to the question of the body in its relation to another human body in an unlawful marriage. Then he introduced the 16th verse which informs us that when a man joins himself to a woman in fleshly relation, even if she be a harlot, she, thereby becomes his wife. But if the man, who thus joins himself, has a wife, what becomes of his relationship to her? It is broken, and according to an implication of the law of Christ (Matthew 19:9), and the law of most civilized countries, she has the right plead for a divorce. But suppose that a man plays fast and loose with his wife and other women, or a woman does so with her husband and other men, what kind of characters do they become? Such a man becomes a “whoremonger,” and such a woman is designated as a “harlot.” In view of all this, what may we safely say of the marriage relation? It is sacred beyond all expression—so sacred that it is utterly broken by every unlawful intercourse on the part of either husband or wife. May that relation, when thus broken, be mended again? Yes. There is but one unpardonable sin. See Mark 3:30. All other sins may be repented of and forgiven, if repented of soon enough.

What is indicated by the 17th verse? The close spiritual relationship which exists between every Christian and the Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:30 further indicates this relationship, and further shows that Christians should regard themselves as very sacred in God's sight, in body as well as in spirit. The 18th verse is an admonition and warning in the same direction, and is intended to impress all Christians with the importance of keeping their bodies in perfect chastity whether they are living in the single or married state. The 19th and 20th verses emphasize that which the preceding verse sets forth. In these last verses we learn that in every Christian dwells an impartation of the Holy Spirit, and that Christians do not belong to themselves, but belong to Christ who has bought them with his own blood. The final exhortation is that Christians should glorify God in their bodies and spirits which they have of God. This suggests chapter 10:31, in which we are in-

formed that Christians should do everything to the glory of God. Does this mean that we can do what is wrong, and do it to the glory of God? No. We cannot do wrong to the glory of God. We may do wrong under wrong persuasion or conviction, and think we are doing something to the glory of God, but wrong-doing can never be to his glory, except on the principle mentioned in Psalm 76:10. God can overrule wrong so that it will be to his praise, but those who are guilty of doing wrong, even with good motives, should not flatter themselves that the Lord will be pleased with it. Right motives cannot change a wrong into that which is right.

CHAPTER VII

Of what is this chapter made up? It is made up of Paul's writings which he wrote "by permission" and according to his own "judgment," and not by "commandment" of the Lord, except the 10th and 11th verses.

Did Paul have any experience in the marriage relation? He did not, as he was never married. What may we then say in regard to this chapter? Except the 10th and 11th verses it is written according to the judgment of a man who did not have any experience in regard to that of which he wrote. Excepting two verses it was without inspiration, and with out experience. But Paul had opportunity for much observation, and that which is set forth in this chapter "by permission" of the Lord is worth considering. Yet Christians should not feel bound by it as if it had been all given by inspiration, or by "command" of the Lord. On the contrary, it should be considered, and applied, according to circumstances. The divine declaration that "it is not good that man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18), is still true, and it is equally true of the woman. But it is better to be alone, at whatever cost, than to be united with an unlovely companion. See Proverbs 21:9, 19. And that which is here said of a woman is equally true of a man. There are both men and women who are constitutionally unhappy, and even hateful, and they ought to be left to have their unhappiness and hatefulness to themselves.

What should a man do who has married a hateful woman? He should never answer her a word when she expresses herself in a hateful manner. And what should a woman do who has a hateful husband? She should never answer any of his hateful words. Reason should not be summoned, nor scripture quoted, as either will only be like adding fuel

to the flame, and like casting pearls before swine. Silence—persistent silence—is the only successful condition to be maintained by either a man or woman when assailed by a contentious and angry companion. The only time when a response should be made is when the contentious and angry one becomes a slanderer, by declaring to others what is not true, and even then the response should be as brief as truth will permit.

The true philosophy of life may be set forth in these sayings:

1. If we are happy ourselves we should try to make others happy.
2. If we are unhappy ourselves we should try to avoid making others unhappy.
3. If others try to make us unhappy we should not suffer them to do it, but should turn their efforts in that direction to good account.
4. In the midst of all the trials of life we should consider how they will appear when they will all have been ended.

What “man” is referred to in the 35th and 36th verses? Reference seems to be here made to a father who has a virgin daughter, but refrains from giving her in marriage because of “the present distress” or liability to be persecuted. The expression “do what he will” is explained by the word “giveth” in the 38th verse, and does not refer to the man intending to marry the virgin. And to whom is reference made in the 38th verse? The father of a virgin is here referred to.

What may we say of the 39th verse? This verse should be considered in the light of chapter 6:16. A wife is not bound to live with an adulterous man, any more than a man is bound to live with an adulterous woman. Adultery, or fornication, on the part of either a husband or wife, breaks the marriage relation.

What may we say of Paul's advice in regard to marrying “only in the Lord”? It is good, not only for widows, but for widowers, and even for those who have never been married. Entrance into the marriage relation is dangerous even when both the man and the woman are Christians, but is more dangerous when they are not.

But how may we know that persons are certainly “in the Lord”? “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Churchmembership may exist without such devotion to Christ as will indicate that persons are “in the, Lord.” But does the

fact that a man or a woman is “in the Lord” give assurance of fitness for the marriage relation? Men and women may be very pious and devoted Christians, yet if they lack good physical health, and good common sense, they are not fit for the marriage relation.

What is the special value of this chapter besides that which is mentioned therein concerning the marriage relation? Its special value consists in the evidence given in it of the definiteness of Paul's inspiration. He knew the very word with which it began and the very word with which it ended. The value of this chapter consists also in the care which Paul manifested in stating wherein he did not have a command of the Lord, but gave his judgment. If all other writers in regard to religion had followed his example in this particular the religious world would not now be in confusion.

CHAPTER VIII

What is set forth in this chapter? The instructions of Paul, as an apostle, concerning idols, knowledge, ignorance, love for God, meats offered unto idols, and the tender regard which Christians should have for each other's consciences, in order not to offend them, and, thereby offend Christ, we here find set forth.

What evidence have we that Paul wrote this chapter by inspiration? The best evidence is that he did not make a declaration to the contrary, as he did in the 7th chapter. When he began this letter he addressed the saints at Corinth as an apostle of Christ, but when he wrote as a man, or simply as a Christian, then he informed them to that effect. See chapter 1:1, 2; 7:6, 12, 25. Therefore, when he did not thus signify that he wrote as a Christian only, then we should conclude that he wrote as an inspired man.

Does knowledge still puff those who have it? That is its general effect, because mankind, generally, do not know anything aright, or in all its bearings. All knowledge possessed by finite beings is fragmentary, or partial. We do not know the beginning nor ending—the primary causes nor ultimate results—of any fact or truth with which we may be acquainted. Those who consider this feel humbled, and even humiliated, while those who do not consider it feel puffed in proportion as they have knowledge. What gift of nature tends most to prevent mankind from becoming puffed by reason of the knowledge they possess? That gift is the kind of brain which will enable those who

have it to show common sense. What else will tend to prevent the possessors of knowledge from becoming puffed? Daily reading and studying of the Bible, for personal advancement in the divine truth, accompanied by close communion with God and Christ by prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, will tend in that direction. This brings the mind to the 3rd verse of this chapter, which declares, that “if any man love God, the same is known of him.” This suggests that “the Lord knoweth them that are his.” (2 Timothy 2:19.)

What may we learn by considering the 4th verse, and onward to the close of the chapter? We may learn that an idol is not anything, except an evil imagination, yet an idol was something to those who thought that an idol was a reality, and, on that account, thought that they should not eat meats that had been offered to idols. We may also learn that when, by the example of another, Christians were emboldened to eat meats that had been offered to idols, and, as a result, ate in a doubtful frame of mind, then they sinned. See Romans 14:23. Next we learn that those who ate in a doubtful frame of mind, and thus sinned, were in danger of being lost, likewise those were in danger of being lost through whom they were emboldened to eat in doubt. Finally, we may learn that Paul would rather refuse meat during the remainder of time than to offend Christ by emboldening a brother to eat meat in a doubtful frame of mind.

What would be the result if all professed Christians would adopt the sentiment which Paul expressed in regard to this subject of eating meats? The result would be that everyone of them would consider the welfare of all the others, and would, thereby, try to avoid giving offense by contending for any preference, or device, in the worship or the work of the Church. As a further result the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace would prevail, innovations would never be adopted, and the Church would always rejoice.

What is suggested by the 12th verse? Matthew 25:40 is suggested, and these two verses, taken together, suggest the condemnation to which those expose themselves who disregard the consciences of, even, the weakest of their brethren. These two scriptures—Matthew 25:40, and the last verse of this chapter—ought to fill everyone with terror at the thought of urging on the Church that which is not required, and which some of the members regard as even doubtful. In order for any act to be acceptable

to God and Christ it must be right in itself, and must be performed with the right motive.

CHAPTER IX

What is here recorded for our learning? Declarations of Paul concerning his apostleship, and his power to require a support in temporal things from those saints who had become such through his labors, we find here recorded. A record is also given of Paul's declarations concerning the support of all who preach the Gospel, and of the act that he had not demanded a support, but had made his preaching without charge, and had become all things to all men as far as the law of Christ would permit. Next we find a record of Paul's teaching concerning those who run, or otherwise strive, for earthly rewards, to illustrate the earnestness which those should manifest who strive for a heavenly reward. The chapter is ended with a record of Paul's declaration about keeping his own body under control in order that he would not be finally lost.

Why did Paul declare his apostleship, as we find it declared in the beginning of this chapter? The indication is that, as an inspired man, he desired to teach the church at Corinth a lesson in regard to his "power" to demand a support, also a lesson in regard to supporting all others who preached the Gospel.

Is the 14th verse of this chapter applicable to preachers now? It is. This verse is of general application, and, it is still true that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Does this mean that men should forsake manual labor and try to preach in order to avoid such labor? No. A man who is too lazy to work for his living will be too lazy to deserve the support of the churches of Christ. But this verse does mean that the faithful preacher should be well supported, and not stinted, nor be oppressed in spirit, because he does not receive sufficient remuneration to keep his family comfortable, if he has a family. On this question many churches of Christ, and multitudes of disciples, are in danger of divine condemnation. They do not give the faithful preacher as much as he should receive, and, then, if he fails to pay his debts they reproach him for his lack of business ability. If he turns from the work of preaching in order to make money enough to pay his debts they say that he is "hiding his light under a bushel," or that he is "burying his talent." But are churches required to furnish a spendthrift with all the money he needs? No.

A spendthrift should never enter the pulpit of any church of Christ.

Did Paul write on this subject because he desired to be better remunerated than he had been by the Corinthian brethren? No. The 15th verse informs us that he had another motive. He gloried in making the Gospel without charge to the church at Corinth. Why did he glory in so doing? In 2 Corinthians 11:12 he informs us that he did so in order that false teachers who did not receive support might not have any advantage over him. Did Paul need to study in order to preach? He did not, and, therefore, could work at manual labor without danger of being unprepared to preach aright. But this is not true of uninspired preachers.

What is indicated in the 17th and 18th verses? The indication is that Paul had also another motive in making the Gospel without charge, and that was he desired a "reward" which would be given to him if he would "willingly" preach without receiving support from the brethren. Whether that "reward" was anything more than the reputation he received by "willingly" laboring for his own support, we are not informed. Acts 20:35 informs us that he desired to be an exemplar for his brethren in regard to laboring and supporting the weak.

Does the 22nd verse of this chapter teach that Paul became all things to all men regardless of right? No. The 21st verse teaches that he regarded the law of Christ in all his conformity to the several classes of persons among whom he labored. What may we say to those who allege that Paul compromised the truth in order to win people? We may charge them with slander, and prove our charge by reading to them Romans 3:8. Besides, the 20th, 21st and 22nd verses of this chapter clearly show in what respects Paul became "all things to all men." He spoke to the Jew from a Jewish viewpoint, and to the Gentile from a Gentile viewpoint. See Acts 13:14-41; 17:22-31.

Did Paul endorse the heathen races and other games for rewards when he referred to them as illustrations? No; not any more than the Savior endorsed the character of the unfaithful steward, and of the unbelieving judge, when he spoke of them to illustrate truth. See Luke 16:1-8; 18:1-6.

What may we learn 'by considering the last verse of this chapter? We may learn, first, that Paul's apostleship did not make his salvation sure, but in order to be saved he

needed to keep his body under and bring it into subjection. This indicates the difference between official character and personal character. Officially, as an apostle, Paul might have done his work aright, and yet he might have become “a castaway,” personally, by reason of personal misconduct, or other unfaithfulness. This verse is in direct opposition to the doctrine of “once in grace always in grace.” Paul was certainly a Christian yet he might have sinned and have been lost. What was true of Paul is true of all others while they remain in the flesh. The eternal salvation of every person 'to whom the Gospel is made known depends on personal obedience to the Gospel followed by personal faithfulness during life.

CHAPTER X

What is set forth for our learning in this chapter? First, the Apostle Paul here set forth a reference to the Israelites in their passage through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness, in order to inform the Corinthian brethren concerning the Israelites, and to warn them by the example of those who were overthrown in the wilderness. The apostle then wrote concerning the communion, and of the importance of the saints at Corinth keeping themselves clear of idolatry. Then he wrote of expediency with reference to eating meats that had been offered to idols, and the importance of Christians regarding with care each other's consciences. The chapter is ended with an exhortation to glorify God in all things, and to avoid giving offense to others, even as Paul avoided it, in order that they might be saved.

What may we learn by considering the reference here made to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea? We may learn that to be “baptized” means to be covered. The record of the passage of the Israelites through the sea indicates that, by the cloud and the sea together, the people of Israel were covered. The cloud passed from before them to their rear, and the sea was in walls on each side of them, while the bottom of the sea was beneath them. Therefore they were encompassed, or surrounded, by the cloud and the sea together, and this is in harmony with the general meaning of ' the word “baptism”, which is a surrounding, or overwhelming.

In what sense were the Israelites “baptized unto Moses”? Exodus 14:31 informs us that after their deliverance at the Red Sea “the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses.” This indicates that they had more

confidence in Moses by reason of their deliverance from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, than ever before. Did they ever again doubt Moses? Yes. Their faith was not more steadfast than is the faith of many who, in the Gospel Age, have been baptized into Christ. The people of fleshly Israel, generally, doubted whenever their faith was tested, and so have many who have professed to be of spiritual Israel.

In what sense could the “Rock” that followed the Israelites in the wilderness be spoken of as “Christ”? In the sense of a shadow, or type. See Hebrews 10:1. That Rock was for their temporal salvation, even as Christ is for our spiritual salvation.

Did the Jews tempt Christ in the wilderness? No. He was not there in person. But they tempted Moses, who was a type of Christ. See Acts 3:22, 23, as evidence that Moses was a type of Christ.

What is referred to in the expression “ends of the world”, as recorded in the 11th verse? Reference is here made to the Gospel Age, for Paul declared that these “ends” of which he wrote “are come.” The word here translated by the word “world” means “a period of time of significant character; life; an era; an age; hence, a state of things marking an era or age.” In view of these shades of meaning and the words “are come”, as previously referred to, the meaning of this expression—“the ends of the world”—can not refer to anything except the Gospel Age.

What use should we make of the warning recorded in the 12th verse? We should consider it at all times. We are not safe from danger at any time, and we are most in danger when we think we are safe. A feeling of security tends to prevent us from being on our guard, and when unguarded we are always in danger. Therefore the warning found in this verse should never be forgotten by any Christian, and it is wholesome for all others.

And what of the assurance recorded in the 13th verse? It should be kept in mind as constantly as the warning mentioned in the preceding verse. The 12th verse was intended to keep Christians on their guard, and the 13th was intended to prevent them from becoming discouraged. The assurance that they shall not be overwhelmed by temptation, but that the Lord will always open up a way of or their escape, should fill Christians with hope during all their trials, and cause them to call on God, in the name of Christ, with full confidence, through all their tribulations.

What may we say of the 14th verse, and onward to the end

of the 21st? We may say that it is an exhortation against idolatry, in course of which an explanation of the communion, or the Lord's supper, is set forth. What should we say to those who deny that "the communion" should be spoken of as "the Lord's supper"? We should inform them that the institution which is here designated "the communion" is, in chapter 11:20-29, mentioned as "the Lord's supper." Besides, in the 21st verse of this chapter we find mention of "the cup of the Lord," and "the Lord's table", in referring to the "communion of the blood of Christ" and "the communion of the body of Christ." Therefore, when we have the communion and have it on "the Lord's table" we certainly have the Lord's supper, and Paul thus designated it in chapter 11:20. He there informed the Corinthian brethren that their procedure when they came together was not "the Lord's supper", and then informed them what the Lord's supper is, and how it was first observed, also that he had received it of the Lord as it was first observed.

What may we learn by considering the 20th and 21st verses? We may learn that the worship of idols is worship rendered to devils, and that Christians cannot be partakers of the worship of God and of devils, and that those who would be Christians would need to keep clear of the worship of devils.

What is indicated in the 23rd verse? The divine doctrine of inexpediency is here indicated, and this doctrine implies that before anything can be "expedient" among Christians it must first be "lawful", or be permitted by the law of Christ. Then in chapter 6:12-20 we learn that, in order for anything to be expedient among Christians, it must not be offensive even to those who are weak in the faith.

But what of the word "wealth" in the Common Version of the 24th verse? It is not in the Greek text, and should not have appeared in any translation of the Sacred Text. The connection shows that spiritual welfare, and not temporal wealth, is the subject which Paul had under consideration.

What of the word "shambles", as recorded in the 25th verse? It means that which is commonly designated "market" in modern English.

What is set forth for our learning in the 27th and 28th verses? The lawfulness of eating meats that had been offered to idols, if the eating of them did not offend any Christian, and the inexpediency of eating such meats, if, by so doing, any Christian was offended, is here set forth.

What of the 29th and 30th verses? They inform us that the conduct of Christians, in things not required, but only per-

mitted, is limited by the consciences of other Christians. But this is not true of anything that is divinely required.

And what of the 31st and 32nd verses? They set forth that the constant purpose of the Christian's mind should be to glorify God, and that this purpose should be so exercised as to avoid offense to Jews, Gentiles, and the Church.

Did Paul have such a purpose? In the last verse of this chapter he informs us that he did.

CHAPTER XI

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are first informed that Paul exhorted the brethren at Corinth to follow, or imitate, him as he followed Christ. Next we are informed that he praised those brethren for keeping certain instructions as he had delivered them to the church at Corinth, and explained to them certain of those instructions. Then he mentioned the Lord's supper, in regard to which he did not praise those brethren, but reproved them for their departure from that which he had delivered to them. This lie followed by a restatement of that which he had formerly delivered to the church at Corinth, in regard to the Lord's supper, also gave certain instructions with reference to it, and promised to set in order all else that was needed when he would come to that church.

Should all Christians now be followers, or imitators, of Paul as he imitated Christ? They should. Christ is set before us as the perfect exemplar for us, and Paul's record shows that he was the perfect imitator of Christ.

Should the word "ordinances" be used in the translation of the 2nd verse of this chapter? No. That word is misleading. Paul did not refer to commands, nor appointments, of any kind, but to traditions, or traditionary law with reference to "custom," as is indicated by the 16th verse. The word translated "custom," in that verse, means "intercourse; use, custom; established custom, practice." The idea then is this: You have kept the traditionary laws as I delivered them to you in regard to covering the head and wearing the hair, but if any man seem to be contentious, or a lover of contention, about such things, I state to you that we have no such established custom, neither have the churches of God.

In view of that which Paul states in the 16th verse should Christians worry themselves in regard to Paul's instructions to the Corinthian brethren with reference to wearing their hair? No. In the 13th verse he appealed to their

own judgment, and in the 14th verse he appealed to “nature,” on this subject. This shows that he was writing in regard to a question of propriety, and not a question of salvation. Therefore, we are not bound by that which is here set forth, for that which is a matter of propriety in one age may not be in another. But is it not still true that it becomes women to wear long hair, and men to wear short hair? It is. Nature seems to teach that much, yet a woman may, for various reasons, wear short hair, and a man may have longer hair than is ordinary without being anything else than a little odd in appearance. We should not be contentious in regard to anything of that kind, for Paul wrote with reference to it only to regulate the brethren at Corinth in regard to it, and not to fasten it on them as an established custom.

But may we not learn something by considering that which is here recorded? Yes. That God is the head of Christ, and Christ is the head of the man, and the man is the head of the woman, is recorded in the 3rd verse. That a man praying or prophesying with his head covered dishonors Christ, and that a woman praying or prophesying with her head *uncovered dishonors* the man, we find recorded in the 4th and 5th verses. That man is the image and glory of God, and woman is the glory of man, we find in the 7th verse. The 6th verse informs us that if a woman is to be like a man in having uncovered, then let her be shorn or shaven like a man. The relationship of man to woman, and of woman to man, we find in the 8th and 9th verses. The 10th verse gives another reason why woman should have a covering on her head, and not be shorn or shaven like a man. That reason refers to angels, and, as it is not explained, we do not understand it, for we do not know either the appearance, or the custom, of the angels. In Matthew 12:43 we find a reference to the custom of evil spirits which is not explained, and, as a result, we cannot understand it. The Lord has not seen fit to inform us much in regard to evil spirits or good spirits, and we should be satisfied.

In the 11th and 12th verses we are further informed concerning the relation of man to woman and woman to man. The 13th verse appeals to the judgment of the brethren at Corinth, and the 14th to the teaching of nature. Then the apostle declares in the 15th verse that long hair is a glory to a woman, for her hair is given to her for a covering. This implies that if she has not any, covering for her head except her hair, that is sufficient. Finally, in the

16th verse, Paul declared to the Corinthians that if any man seems to be contentious, on this question, then he wished them to understand that neither he, nor the churches of God, had anything of that kind as a custom, or as an established something, that they should contend over. In other words, he had written to them in regard to a matter of propriety, and not to fasten on them a rule.

Of what are we informed in the 17th verse and onward to the end of this chapter? We are informed that Paul did not praise the Corinthians for their procedure when they came together “to eat the Lord's supper,” for their procedure was such that they came together “for the worse” and not “for the better.” Then he proceeded to inform them of that to which he referred, namely, that they had added to the bread and fruit of the vine, which belonged to the Lord's supper, other food, and had made a sort of picnic, or festival, of that supper. He reproved them in regard to this, then informed them that he had “received of the Lord” that which he had “delivered unto” them, and he gave special instructions in regard to the manner and spirit in which the Lord's supper should be observed. To this he added that when they came together to eat they should “tarry one for another,” and that if any man would be hungry he should “eat at home,” in order that they should not come together “unto condemnation.”

In view of all this, what may we say of those who come together to eat and drink to satisfy hunger, when they assemble to commune? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” In the 22nd verse Paul declared, by implication, that the Corinthian brethren had houses “to eat and drink in,” and that they should “eat and drink in” them and not act as if they despised “the Church of God” by eating and drinking to satisfy hunger when they came together to worship. If in addition to this we consider the declaration, in the last verse, namely, “and if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation,” then the evidence is complete in opposition to Christians eating to satisfy hunger when they come together to worship. But when we meet for worship, may we not, after the worship is over, take something to eat for the body, especially, if we have a long distance to go, or intend to remain to have another meeting before we finally separate for the day? Certainly we may, for in so doing we do not mix our eating to satisfy hunger with our spiritual eating and drinking in worship. Acts 20:11

indicates that Paul took something to eat after the worship was over at Troas.

What is meant by the word “unworthily,” as found in the 27th verse? The connection in which it is found shows that it means to eat bread, and drink of the fruit of the vine, in the communion without considering that those elements refer to the body and blood of the Lord Jesus. By thus eating and drinking the Corinthians were “guilty of the body and blood of the Lord,” because they changed those elements from a commemorative use to a common use. But may we not be “guilty of the body and blood of the Lord” if, in a sinful and impenitent condition of mind and heart, we partake of the communion? To say the least there is danger in doing so. Our effort to commune, in such an instance, is hypocrisy, and brings us under further condemnation.

What is referred to in the 30th verse? The result of communing “unworthily” is referred to. Many of the church at Corinth were under condemnation because of their unworthy participation in the Lord's supper, and they were spiritually “weak and sickly.” But may not the words “weak and sickly” refer to their physical condition which the Lord had inflicted on them because of their unworthy communion? In answer to this question we may say that such a reference is not indicated in the text, nor in that which precedes it. But in the 31st and 32nd verses there is an intimation which may be considered as having such a bearing, especially the 32nd verse. For Christians to be “chastened of the Lord” may mean physical afflictions, which he brings upon them, or, at least, suffers to come upon them.

What may we learn by considering the 19th verse of this chapter? The Greek word translated “heresies” in this verse means “choice, option, division, strife, contention, faction, party,” and Paul here declares that such things are necessary in order that those who are approved of God may have opportunity to show themselves. Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be among disciples of Christ. In nearly every congregation there are two classes—the approved and the disapproved. The approved consist of those who are truly converted to Christ and are daily endeavoring to avoid becoming perverted. The disapproved are those who never were fully converted to Christ, or, after becoming converted, allowed themselves to become perverted. As a result, of their unconverted or half-converted, or perverted, condition, they are not satisfied with the Church

in its simplicity and purity, or they are not willing to practice the doctrine of bearing and forbearing in regard to other members of the church. They are unhappy, and, therefore, are not satisfied. They are not right themselves and they try to look for something that is not right in others. And they are sure to find it, especially in those whose conversation, conduct, and teaching, are such as to reprove them for their wrongs. If they cannot find anything that is real they will try to imagine something. At the same time they will try to speak favorably of the enemies of the church, and will praise those who oppose the best men and women in the church. When a heresy—a matter of human choice in doctrine or practice—is introduced by some one, then those who are not approved of God will favor it. If they do not actually adopt it they will speak evil of the efforts of those who oppose it, and endeavor to say that “both sides are wrong.” In many instances they will adopt the heresy with zeal, and will thereby reveal at once that they are not in harmony with the Gospel in its simplicity and purity. Thus it has been in all generations since the Church was established, and thus it will be till the end of time.

On the other hand, those who are approved of God because they are Christians in reality, as well as in profession, will sooner or later oppose every heresy. They may not, in every instance, recognize a heresy when first introduced, but may need to see some of its outworkings. Yet, in course of time, if not at first, they will decide against every heresy, and thus will show that they are approved of God. Heresies, therefore, are necessary in the Church to separate the approved from the disapproved, the true disciples from those who are only pretenders. This is the bearing of the declaration, “There must be also heresies among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest among you.”

CHAPTER XII

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter? We may learn much of Paul's teaching concerning spiritual gifts which were bestowed on members of the church in Corinth, and upon many others of the New Testament Church, before the New Testament scriptures had been fully given, or given in their completeness, in documentary form.

What is the bearing of the 3rd verse of this chapter? The bearing is that the testimony given of Christ, by the Holy

Spirit, does not call him “accursed,” and that all who “say that Jesus is the Lord” must have been enabled to speak of him thus by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. For instance, the Apostle Peter was dependent on the Holy Spirit for the testimony which enabled him to ask, “Lord, to whom shall we go?” See John 6:68. The same was true of the thief who said, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” See Luke 23:42. Does this mean that the Holy Spirit operated directly on the thief in order to enable him to address Jesus as “Lord”? No. When Jesus was baptized the Holy Spirit came upon him, and from that time onward that Spirit testified through Jesus himself, and afterwards through his twelve Apostles, and then through seventy others, that he should be called “Lord.” For instance, in Matthew 12:8, Jesus said of himself, “For the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath day,” and, in Acts 1:6, we learn that his disciples addressed him as “Lord” even before the Holy Spirit had enabled them to speak with tongues. See also John 20:28. But in every instance the knowledge that enabled the Apostles, both before and after the Pentecost mentioned in Acts 2nd chapter, to speak to Christ, or of him, as “Lord” was given directly, or indirectly, by the Holy Spirit.

What may we learn by considering the 9th verse of this chapter? We may learn that faith was a special gift to at least one member of the church at Corinth. What should we say to those who use this verse to prove that the faith, or belief, which every one must have in order to be saved is a special gift? We should say, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.” The faith, or belief, that is necessary to save sinners, and saints, is produced by reading and hearing the divine testimony, as found in the Sacred Text. See John 20:30, 31; Acts 14:1; 17:11; Romans 10:17. But the faith here mentioned by Paul was a special gift, bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon one of the saints, perhaps on several of them, in order to accomplish some special purpose in the church at Corinth. It may have been that degree of faith which was necessary in order to work extraordinary miracles. See Matthew 17:14-20, also chapter 13:2.

What else may we learn by considering this verse? That “the gifts of healing” were special “gifts,” bestowed by the Holy Spirit, we may also learn. Then the next verse gives further evidence in the same direction. In view of all this, what should we answer those who declare that Christians could work miracles now if they only had the faith?

We should answer them in the affirmative, but should at once inform them that the power to work miracles was a special gift, and that even the faith necessary to work certain miracles was a special gift, even as the power to speak with tongues was a special gift. Then we should ask them, if the Lord does not bestow such faith now, how are we going to get it? Besides, the 10th verse makes mention of the gift of “prophecy” and of “tongues” even as the 8th verse makes mention of the gift of “knowledge,” and, in chapter 13:8, we learn that all these gifts should cease. This implies that all other gifts should cease, especially as we do not find any reason stated why some of them should cease while others should continue.

What is indicated in the 13th verse? The indication here is that by the teaching of the Holy Spirit all who become Christians are baptized into the body of Christ, and then, by following that teaching, they are all made to drink into the teaching of that Spirit. In the 3rd verse is indicated the meaning of the 13th, for in the 3rd verse the expression “by the Holy Spirit” means by the teaching, or testimony, of that Spirit. The baptism of the Corinthians here referred to is first mentioned in Acts 18:8, and the declaration there is that “many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.” Then in Romans 10:17 we are informed that “hearing” comes “by the word of God,” and in Acts 2:4; 4:31, we learn that “the word of God” was spoken by the Apostles when they were “filled” with the Holy Spirit. In view of all this, the conclusion is certain that the 13th verse of this chapter means that by obeying the teaching of the Holy Spirit as made known by Paul those who became Christians at Corinth were baptized into the body of Christ, and, then, by continuing to obey the teachings of the Spirit they were made “to drink into one Spirit.” The expression “drink into one Spirit” is figurative, even as “baptized into one body” is figurative. In John 7:37, 38 we find figurative language, in regard to the Spirit, which is explained in the 39th verse of that same chapter. In the 12th verse of the chapter under consideration Paul made mention of the Church as the body of Christ, then in the 13th verse he mentioned how the Church became the body of Christ, and, then, in the 14th verse we find that he began to explain, by an illustration, how the Church could be one, and yet consist of many members. The illustration that he used is the human body. After completing his use of that illustration in the 26th verse he declared, to the saints at Cor-

inth, “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular,” which means that they were, individually, members of that body.

What of the 28th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? In the 28th verse we find a general statement, or summary, of the different classes, or orders, of gifts, several of which are mentioned in the 8th, 9th and 10th verses of this chapter. What should we say to those who declare that the word “helps” here mentioned refer to such helps as lesson leaves, and instrumental music, or, at least, justify the use of such helps? We should refer them to 1 Peter 4:11, and inform them that if they would obey what Peter says in that verse they would not plead for the use of so-called “helps” that are not mentioned by the Holy Spirit. Those who received the “knowledge” and “wisdom,” mentioned in the 8th verse, were certainly “helps,” and “governments.” Knowledge is always a help, and wisdom is needed to regulate or govern. See chapter 6:5, in regard to wisdom.

What kind of answers do the questions recorded in the 29th and 30th verses imply? They all imply negative answers. Those who were specially gifted by the Holy Spirit did not all have the same gifts, except the Apostles. As far as we are informed, the Apostles were all equally gifted, and each apostle was equal to, or superior to, all the members of any church in spiritual gifts. An intimation to this effect is found in chapter 14:18.

What of the last verse? In it we find a command to the saints at Corinth to “covet,” or desire, “the best gifts.” This implies that some gifts were better than others, and this implication is explained in chapter 14:18, 19. Those gifts were “best” which enabled the saints who possessed them to edify the church. But what did Paul refer to when he made mention of “the more excellent way”? He referred to the way mentioned in the 13th chapter, which is the way of “charity,” or of that love which will cause those who possess it to bear with the weaknesses and peculiarities of each other, and thereby keep peace in the congregation, and in the entire brotherhood of disciples. That “way,” according to Paul, would be better, or “more excellent,” than the possession of the best spiritual gifts. The “way” of “charity” is necessary in order for the Church to maintain that “oneness” for which the Savior prayed, in order that sinners might be converted and saints perfected.

CHAPTER XIII

And what is set forth in this chapter? The “more excellent way” mentioned in the last verse of the preceding chapter, is here set forth.

What is that way? It is the way of that “charity,” which is otherwise designated “love,” and which impels Christians to be good in all of life's relations. The 3rd verse indicates that it is not the charity which consists of liberality toward the poor in regard to temporal things. But it is that devotion to the best interests of others which will cause those who possess it to be unselfish toward them. This is clearly indicated in the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th verses. In the first three verses of this chapter Paul sets forth the emptiness of all special gifts, and of the most extreme liberality, in himself, if he had not the “charity” which he here commanded. The Greek word translated “charity,” in this instance means “love,” and should have been translated by the word “love.” The application of this word in the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th verses indicates that it is used in the sense of a desire to benefit others, and consists of a benevolent feeling toward them. Thus it was that the possession and exercise of the best of gifts, and of the most unreserved liberality, would not enable Paul to be acceptable to God if he lacked the “charity” of which he wrote.

But how can any one have as much “charity,” love, or benevolence, as is indicated in the expression “thinketh no evil,” as recorded in the last of the 5th verse? That expression is an index to the condition of mind referred to by the word “charity” as used in this chapter. Those who have “charity” for each other will not take an unfavorable view on each other's words or actions, when they are not compelled to believe unfavorably concerning them. The expression “thinketh no evil,” in the 5th verse, should be considered in connection with the expression “believeth all things” in the 7th verse. When the testimony on any question is sufficient to prove that which is alleged, then this “charity” will cause those possessed of it to believe what is alleged. But, in the absence of such testimony, and when there is only an appearance ' or intimation, in regard to any person, then “charity” will not put an unfavorable, or evil, construction on such appearance, or intimation. Thus it is that charity “thinketh no evil,” yet “believeth all things.” It does not allow those who possess it to think evil when they can reasonably think otherwise, and yet it causes those who have it to believe

all that is well attested. Therefore, the charity that Paul recommends does not cause those who have it to be blind, or foolish, in behalf of any one toward whom it is manifested, but it causes them to be benevolent, considerate, and fair-minded. Such charity is necessary in every family, in every church, and in every social circle, in order that wrong inferences may be avoided, and peace may be maintained.

What is the bearing of the declaration, “charity never faileth,” as found in the first of the 8th verse? The remainder of the verse shows the bearing of that declaration to be that “charity” will continue. Special gifts should cease, but “charity” should abide.

What is set forth in the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th verses? The partial knowledge of those who were possessed of special gifts, when compared with the knowledge of those who will have the perfected revelation, is here indicated. This is evident by the illustration here given of the partial knowledge of a child when compared with the more extended knowledge of a man. And, as a man's knowledge banishes the partial views of a child, so the perfected revelation would enable saints to banish the partial knowledge bestowed by a special gift. That the word “perfect” in the 10th verse refers to the perfected, or completed, revelation, is evident from James 1:25. That is to say, to each inspired person was given only a part of divine revelation, while those to whom the whole Bible would be offered would have the privilege of learning all of the divine revelation. To this Paul referred in the 9th and 10th verses, and then illustrated it in the 11th and 12th. Seeing as a child and looking “through a glass darkly,” are facts used to illustrate the partial views of those inspired ones who only knew that which they were chosen to reveal. Then seeing as a man and seeing “face to face,” even knowing “as we are known,” are facts used to illustrate the privilege of those who may use the entire written revelation which is set forth in the Bible. Therefore, those who have the privilege of studying and understanding the whole Bible certainly may learn more of God's will to man than any one, except the Savior, ever knew.

What may we learn by studying the last verse of this chapter? “Faith” will be ended in knowledge, and “hope” will be ended in that which we expect and desire, but “charity” will continue beyond the boundaries of time. A desire for each other's welfare will exist in the redeemed ones in the ages of eternity. Therefore, the charity that

is here commended is declared to be greater than either hope or faith. Christians are required to exercise it in this life, and it will exist in them in the life to come.

CHAPTER XIV

What is recorded in this chapter for our instruction? Ail exhortation of Paul to the “saints” at Corinth, and to “all that in every place” then called “upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,” is here recorded, followed by certain explanations and directions, even to the end of this chapter.

What is Paul's exhortation to the saints at Corinth in the beginning of this chapter? His exhortation is to “follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.” Why did he thus exhort in regard to prophecy after the eulogy which he pronounced on “charity” in the preceding chapter? His eulogy on charity remains, and we should not infer that he intended to cast any reflection on charity. That which is here declared concerning prophecy should be considered in relation to spiritual gifts, and not in regard to charity. In other words, Paul did not intend to teach that prophesying was preferable to charity, but that it was the most important of the spiritual gifts which Christians could have. In chapter 12:28 the “prophets” are mentioned as next to the Apostles in the Church. This being understood we are prepared to consider Paul's reason for exhorting that the saints at Corinth should prefer prophecy above all other spiritual gifts. That reason is set forth in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th verses, and onward, with certain explanations and regulations, even to the end of the chapter. That reason is summed up in the declaration that “he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort.”

What does the word here translated “prophecy” mean? Its first shades of meaning are, “to exercise the function of a prophet; to prophesy, to foretell the future.” Then the word “prophet” means, first, “a spokesman for another, a spokesman or interpreter for a deity.” Next it means “a divinely commissioned and inspired person; a prophet, a foreteller of future events.” In Acts 11:27, 28 mention is made of “prophets from Jerusalem.” See also Acts 21:10, 11. Taking the primary meaning, or first shades of meaning, of the words “prophecy” and “prophet,” as those words are defined in the best Greek dictionaries, also as those words were first used in regard to the New

Testament Church, and the conclusion is unavoidable that they, first of all, refer to the future. That is their primary idea. But the prophets of the New Testament Church were not confined to telling future events. The 3rd verse of this chapter informs us that those who prophesied in that church spoke unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort. The 4th verse declares, "He that prophesieth edifieth the church." Yet the fact that the prophets foretold future events gave them their name, and we have not the slightest evidence that any in the Church mentioned in the New Testament were designated prophets who were not gifted in regard to the future. The prophets spoken of in Acts 11:27, 28; 21:10, 11, certainly spoke "unto men to edification" when one of them foretold a dearth, and the other foretold what the Jews at Jerusalem would do unto Paul. But, as the word "prophet" means also "a spokesman for another," we are led to conclude that the Lord used the prophets in his Church to be mediums for anything that he desired to say to the members of the church in the absence of the Apostles. Besides, in the light of Romans 15:4, we may go back to the Old Testament and consider what the prophets did in the days of ancient Israel. In going back to them we learn that, first of all, they foretold future events, and on the basis of that which they foretold, or in relation to it, they said and wrote much else to the Jewish people. In view of this we are further impelled to conclude that all who are designated, by the word "prophets," in both the Old Testament and the New, were used, by the Lord, at some time, or times, to foretell future events. As a result we must conclude that those who were not, at any time, inspired to foretell future events were not by the Holy Spirit designated as "prophets." Therefore, we should not speak of any of the teachers in the Church now as "prophets."

Were there any "teachers" in the New Testament Church who were not classed with prophets? Chapter 12:28 answers this question, and the answer that it gives indicates that we do not now need to speak of our teachers as prophets.

Why have any disciples of Christ contended that teachers in the Church now should be designated "prophets"? In order to allow women to become teachers in the public congregation. As those who prophesied spake "unto edification," and, in chapter 11:5, we find mention of a woman prophesying, certain men, and perhaps women, have tried to separate the word "prophet" from foretelling future

events. Then by uniting chapter 11:5 with chapter 14:3, 4, they think they have made out a clear case in favor of woman as a public teacher in opposition to 1 Timothy 2:12. But this is not all. When a woman who foretold future events is spoken of in the Bible she is not designated a “prophet,” but a “prophetess.” See Luke 2:36; Revelation 2:20. Another form of the word for prophet is used in the Greek, as well as in English, to designate a woman who foretold future events. This indicates that the “prophets” who spoke unto edification in the Church were men only, and not women, at least they were not married women. The only women that we read of in the New Testament Church “who did prophesy” were “virgins.” See Acts 21:9.

What should we say to those who declare that Paul's reference to the “pipe” and “harp” and “trumpet” in the 7th and 8th verses of this chapter may be used as an argument in favor of musical instruments in the Church? We should say to them that Paul made reference* to those instruments as an illustration. The word “so” in the beginning of the 9th verse indicates this. Besides, we might as well contend that Paul's reference to races and other striving for prizes, in chapter 9:24, 25, may be used as an argument in favor of races and other physical strivings for prizes in the Church. Such reasoning is contemptible to all except heretics.

What is the bearing of Paul's argument in this chapter in regard to prophesying and speaking with tongues? It is summed up in the declaration, “Let all things be done unto edifying.” See the end of the 26th verse.

What may we say of the 15th verse? It teaches us that Paul was not a mere formalist, as a worshiper, but exercised his spirit and his understanding in his worship. What do the advocates of instrumental music, in the worship of God through Christ, add to this verse? They, by implication, add, I will play with my fingers and with my mouth also! This they do by adding their stringed and wind instruments to the worship as an accompaniment, or as a leader in their song service. Such an addition is a heresy.

What may we say of the 16th verse? It was written in opposition to offering thanks in an unknown tongue that could not be understood by all who were present when the offering was made. It may be justly used by us in opposition to all learned phrases in giving thanks, in pray-

ing, and in preaching, also against persons offering thanks in such a low tone, or mumbling tone, of voice that they cannot be understood by others. Though loud and irreverent tones of voice should be avoided in praying and giving of thanks, yet the low and mumbling tone should likewise be avoided. A man might as well pray, or offer thanks, in an unknown tongue as to mutter, or mumble, so as not to be heard. Some men when called on to pray, or offer thanks, drop their chins on their chests, and so cramp the larynx that they cannot ' be understood five feet from the place where they are positioned. This is all, by implication, condemned by Paul in the 16th verse of this chapter, also by his declaration, "Let all things be done unto edifying." If we fail to edify those of our fellow mortals who should hear our public speaking, whether our speaking is addressed to God, or to men, we fail to accomplish one of the divinely appointed ends of such speaking. Therefore, "Let all things be done unto edifying." The 19th verse of this chapter shows how intense Paul was on this question of. edification.

What may we learn by considering the 20th verse? Little children do not cherish malice, and Paul refers to their lack of malice as an example for Christians, yet he desires that all Christians shall be "men," or, as the Greek word here used indicates, he desires them to be as those of " a ripe age." This should be the condition in all churches of Christ. The members should be like children, in regard to malice, but like mature persons in understanding. In many instances professed Christians reverse this. They act like mature persons in regard to malice and like children in understanding. What is the secret of such behavior on the part of many professed Christians? They do not study the Bible so as to overcome their natural defects. Hence they remain in ignorance of the Lord's requirements of them, and act with impulse, passion, foolishness, hatefulness.

And what may we learn by considering the 22nd verse? We may learn that the gift of tongues was divinely intended to convince unbelievers, while the gift of prophecy was intended for the benefit of believers. This is the verse which clearly shows that the gift of tongues bestowed on Cornelius and his friends was not to make them Christians, but to convince the Jews who were present that the Gentiles were Gospel subjects. See Acts 10:44-48; 11:1-18.

What is the bearing of Paul's argument in the 23rd, 24th

and 25th verses? It is that if all in a church would speak with tongues then an unfavorable impression would be made on the mind of an unbeliever, when he would hear them; but if all would prophesy he would be convinced, because judged of all. Therefore, though tongues were “for a sign” to those who did not believe, yet if all of a church should speak with tongues the impression on an unbeliever would not be as favorable as if all would prophesy, and thus speak to edification.

What may we learn by considering the 26th verse and onward to the end of the 28th? We may learn that the Lord did not intend that one person should do all the talking in the regular meetings of the Church which he established. This is in direct opposition to the modern system in most of the churches that are not mentioned in the Bible. Those churches employ a pastor, who, generally, does all the talking at the regular meetings on the first day of the week.

What is the meaning of the word “course” in the 27th verse? In the connection in which it is here found it means “ alternately, one after another,” or, “one by one,” as is mentioned in the 31st verse.

And what is indicated in the 32nd verse? The last of the 30th verse shows what is indicated. Paul commanded that only one should speak at a time to the same audience, and if anything was revealed to one, then the other should “hold his peace.” The fact that he was commanded to “hold his peace” clearly implies that the prophetic spirit, or gift, in a prophet was subject to the prophet who possessed it. In other words, the man possessed the gift, and not the gift the man. Therefore, the man could control the gift and remain silent when good order so required. Having set this forth Paul explained by saying, “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” What effect should this last declaration have on all professed Christians? It should cause them to avoid all confusion in their meetings. But what may we say of those religious persons who make earnest efforts in their meetings to have confusion, and who act as if confusion is necessary to conversion? They “do err” not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. The idea that persons need to be confused in order to be converted to Christ is the very reverse of truth.

But should the doctrine, taught by the Holy Spirit through Paul, that only one should speak at a time to the same

audience, be urged against several classes of children, or adults, being taught in a meeting-house at one time? It should not. Each class is a separate audience, and when the voice of each teacher is properly modulated, then there is not the semblance of confusion. If a meeting-house is large, then a dozen, or more, classes may be taught in it without confusion. Therefore, that which the Holy Spirit here declares in regard to confusion cannot be justly urged against a church having several classes, or audiences, in a meeting-house, and have them instructed by teachers who will modulate their voices so as not to annoy those not in their separate audience. An elder, or a deacon, of the church should remind loud-talking teachers that they are producing confusion, and thus regulate those who do not regulate themselves.

And what of the 34th and 35th verses? These verses make mention of the silence which women were to maintain in the public congregation. Does the word “silence” as here used mean utter silence in every respect? The connection does not so indicate. That which precedes indicates that reference is here made to “silence” in regard to making a public speech in the congregation by way of teaching the congregation. Then the 35th verse indicates that Paul referred to asking questions, in such a congregation, which would introduce confusion. The 33rd verse declares that “God is not the author of confusion,” and then in the 34th Paul gave directions against women speaking in public. This is followed in the 35th verse by a statement concerning that which women should do when they wish to “learn anything.” Finally, the 35th verse indicates that Paul was referring to women who had husbands. The Greek word here used for “woman” also means “wife,” and the connection, in each use of that word, must determine whether reference is made to a married woman, or one that is unmarried. In the 34th verse the indication is that reference is made to married women, for Paul says, “Let your women keep silence in the churches.” This should be read thus: “Let your wives keep silence in the churches.” Then the declaration, “but they are commanded to be under obedience” confirms this conclusion in regard to the correct reading of this text. For Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; also 1 Peter 3:1, show that the obedience was to be rendered by women to their husbands, and this implies that they were married women. The reference to “child-bearing” in I Timothy 2:15 further confirms the conclusion just mentioned. But all that is said concerning

“silence” in this connection should be considered also in the light of 1 Timothy 2:12. There we learn that the “silence” enjoined is in regard to teaching and usurping authority. But do any of these instructions concerning the silence of wives prevent them from teaching children in a Bible class? No. That is not teaching in the public congregation, nor usurping authority over men.

What may we say of unmarried women who are members of the Church? As we have not any special directions concerning them they need to be regulated by the elders of the church, as the members generally are regulated. But the married women should be regulated by their husbands.

What is the bearing of the questions in the 36th verse of this chapter? The bearing of those questions seems to be that Paul desired to impress on the minds of the saints at Corinth that the word of God did not begin, nor end, with them. This is a wholesome consideration for all others.

And what of the 37th and 38th verses? The 37th verse clearly indicates that Paul wrote by commandment all that he had set forth on the subjects mentioned in this chapter, likewise all that he had previously written in this letter except that which he wrote by permission in the 7th chapter. The fact that he wrote “the commandments of the Lord” to the church at Corinth indicates his verbal inspiration in a degree that cannot be doubted by those who are true believers in the Sacred Text. “But if any man be ignorant” of this “let him be ignorant.” In other words, if any man does not know enough to “acknowledge” that Paul wrote “the commandments of the Lord” to the church at Corinth, then “let him be ignorant.” This intimates that any effort to instruct such a man would be, in vain.

What may we say of the 39th verse? It states Paul's conclusions on the subjects therein mentioned, and which are the burden of this chapter, namely, prophesying and speaking with tongues. Besides, it indicates that Paul did not change his teaching in course of this chapter. He began with certain statements to the effect that prophesying is of greater benefit to the church than speaking with tongues, and he concluded with an intimation of the same kind, when he wrote, “Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.”

What is the application of the last verse of this chapter? Its application is universal, though it first applies, to that

which is done in the assembly, or public congregation. The command in the last of the 26th verse, "Let all things be done unto edifying," and this command: "Let all things be done decently and in order," were both intended, first of all, to regulate the saints at Corinth in that part of their worship which pertains to teaching. But as the giving of thanks and the song service were intended for edification, we may safely conclude that both of the mentioned commands were intended to apply to them also, likewise to all else that pertained to the church. There is authority in those commands for Christians to arrange the time of all their meetings, the order of them all, and even authority to arrange for the best one to conduct them. Here is authority for dividing persons into classes in Bible readings, and appointing over them suitable instructors, who will give milk to babes and strong meat to those who are of full understanding. All will admit that meetings for Bible readings are authorized. Colossians 4:16 is an indication on this subject, and when Paul declared, "Let all things be done unto edifying," and, "Let all things be done decently and in order," he gives all the authority that is needed to arrange such readings so as to accomplish the ends which those commands were intended to accomplish.

CHAPTER XV

"What saith the scripture," as here recorded? In this chapter Paul set forth certain declarations concerning the gospel of Christ, then sets forth divine evidence concerning the resurrection of Christ's body from the grave, with an argument based thereon, in favor of his resurrection, and then set forth the divine doctrine in regard to the resurrection of all mankind, especially the immortality of the new body that will be given to the saints in the resurrection. The chapter is ended with an exhortation of Paul in regard to steadfastness in the truth, and abounding in the work of the Lord.

What may we safely say of Paul's declarations concerning the Gospel? We may safely say that they are the clearest declarations of the Gospel that we can find in the Bible, and are so clear that those who have the Bible are without excuse for not understanding the Gospel. In these declarations Paul sets forth that the death of Christ for our sins, and the burial and resurrection of Christ, "according to the Scriptures," are the Gospel; that is, these facts are the Gospel in its chief details. He thereby informs us that

these facts of the Gospel are three in number, namely, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. But how can these facts be obeyed? We can conform to them by dying to sin, being buried with Christ, and being raised with him to walk in newness of life. See Romans 6:1-4. The 2nd verse of Romans 6th chapter implies that the saints at Rome, in becoming such, ceased the practice of sin, by ceasing to live in sin. Then the 3rd and 4th verses of that chapter inform us that they were baptized into Christ, and in so doing were buried with him by baptism into death, and raised to walk in newness of life: In view of this we may safely say that in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 the Gospel, in its facts, is set forth, and in Romans 6:1-4 the Gospel, in its doctrine, is set forth so plainly that those who have a New Testament, or can get one, especially if they can read well, are without excuse if they do not understand the Gospel. If they cannot read well they should learn to do so in order that they may read for themselves what the Gospel of their salvation is, and what it requires of them.

But how may Bible readers learn with certainty what it means to die to sin, be buried with Christ in baptism, and be raised to walk in newness of life? They may learn by reading and studying the “Book of Acts” that they must believe in Christ wholeheartedly, repent of their sins wholeheartedly, confess their faith in Christ wholeheartedly, and then be immersed in water wholeheartedly.

What did Paul refer to by the expression “unless ye have believed in vain,” as found in the last of the 2nd verse? The last of the 14th verse indicates that he referred to the denial of the resurrection which some of the Corinthian brethren were guilty of. See his argument in the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th verses.

And what did Paul refer to by the expression “according to the Scriptures” as set forth in the 3rd and 4th verses? He made reference to the prophecies concerning Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

What may we learn by considering the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th verses? We may learn that twelve men who were called Apostles saw Jesus after his resurrection before Paul saw him, and this implies that Matthias, who was chosen in the place of Judas, was recognized by the Holy Spirit through Paul as an apostle, as “he was numbered with eleven apostles” (Acts 1:26), and is here, by implication, one of the “twelve.”

And what of the 8th and 9th verses when considered to-

gether? In them we are informed that Paul wrote of himself as “one born out of due time,” as “the least of the apostles,” and as not fit “to be called an apostle” because he “persecuted the church of God.” This, perhaps, explains the reason that only twelve Apostles are spoken of in Revelation 21st chapter. In the 10th verse Paul declared that he “labored more abundantly” than all the other Apostles, but attributed his labors to the grace of God that was within him. In the 11th he intimated that it was not a matter of importance whether he preached, or the other Apostles preached, but the important matter was that the Corinthian saints had become believers.

What do we find in the 12th verse and onward to the end of the 19th? We find an argument in favor of the resurrection of the dead based on the resurrection of Christ. This argument is to the effect that if ' Christ was not raised from the dead, then the faith of the Corinthian brethren was “in vain,” they were yet in their “sins,” the Apostles were “false witnesses,” and those that had fallen asleep in Christ had “perished.” By a statement of such results Paul showed the absurdity of the position which those occupied who denied that the dead will be raised.

What may we say of the teaching found in the 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses? In the 20th verse Paul declared the conclusion of his argument that he had offered, and added that Christ had “become the first fruits of them that slept,” also that “since by man [Adam] came death, by man [Christ] came also the resurrection of the dead,” and this he explained by saying, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” To this he added, “But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.”

What is meant by the expression, “Christ the first fruits”? He is the first one that has been raised from the dead to immortality, and, thus, not to die any more. All who had been previously raised from the dead were only raised to this life, and, therefore, became subject to death again.

What may we say of the 22nd and 23rd verses? They teach that all mankind will be raised from the dead, and the 23rd verse implies that, there will be more than one. order of characters in the resurrection. This implication is in harmony with Revelation 20:5.

And what of the 24th, 25th and 26th verses? They indicate that Christ is now reigning, and that he will reign till he will have put down all enemies, even death, and then

he will cease to reign, but will deliver up the kingdom to God.

What should we say to those who declare that Jesus is not yet King, and, thus, has not yet commenced to reign? We should refer them to the 24th verse of this chapter, point out that in it Paul makes mention of the end of Christ's reign, and then demand of them to show, by chapter and verse, when and where it will begin. We should refer them to Colossians 1:13, also, and ask them how the saints at Colosse could have been translated "into the kingdom of God's dear Son" if that Son was not at that very time reigning as King.

What is indicated in the 27th and 28th verses? The indication here is that God will not be subjected to Christ, but that when Christ shall have subdued all things to himself, then he will become subject to God.

in what sense will death be destroyed? The time will come when both good and bad will be raised from the dead to die no more, in the sense that we speak of death in relation to the body. But will the destruction of death also destroy "the second death" that is mentioned in Revelation 20th chapter, 6th and 14th verses? No. That which is designated "the second death" will consist of the punishment of the wicked as mentioned in Revelation 14:10, 11, and in which "the smoke of their torment" will ascend up "forever and ever."

What may we say of the 29th verse? As the subject under consideration by Paul in this chapter is the resurrection, the bearing of the 29th verse must be that in baptism the resurrection of the dead is acknowledged, and, therefore, Paul inquired what they shall do, or what will become of them, who are baptized for, or in view of, the resurrection of the dead. The passage may, therefore, be read after this manner: "Else what shall they do who are baptized for [in view of] the dead [the resurrection of the dead], if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for [in view of] the dead [the resurrection of the dead] ?" The 30th, 31st and 32nd verses confirm this reading of the 29th verse as correct, for these verses further refer to that which Paul had done, and was still doing in view of the resurrection from the dead. The 19th verse of this chapter also has the same bearing. It declares, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable."

Did Paul actually fight with brute beasts at Ephesus, or

did he have reference to men who acted as unreasonably as brutes could have acted? Acts 19:23-34 indicate that he could have referred to men who acted like beasts. And what of the sentence, "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die"? It indicates Paul's idea of the vanity of this life if the dead are not to be raised. He implies that this life is of such little worth that we might as well give ourselves up to voluptuousness, if there will not be a resurrection of the dead.

What may we learn by considering the 33rd and 34th verses? We may learn that those of the Corinthian saints who denied the resurrection had been in bad company, and had not "the knowledge of God." In Acts 17:32 we learn that some of the heathen at Athens were disposed to mock when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, and Paul here intimates that association with such had led certain professed Christians at Corinth to deny that the dead will be raised. His exhortation, "Awake to righteousness and sin not," bears in this direction, and so does the charge of ignorance which he made to their "shame" in the 34th verse. Is it still true that "evil communications corrupt good manners"? It is, especially with those who are ignorant of "the knowledge of God," as that knowledge is revealed in the Sacred Text ' and who are "unstable" in their natural disposition. In proportion as they associate with evil characters they become corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ if they have accepted that simplicity, and, if they have not accepted it they become so corrupted that they will not accept it.

But what may we say of Paul's reasoning in the 35th, 36th, 37th and 38th verses? He pronounced that man a "fool" who would ask, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come!" Then he proceeded to show that in nature the body that is sown is not the body that shall be, yet intimates that, as a part of the grain that is sown comes up, so a part of the human body that is buried in the earth shall come up, and then declares that God gives that part of the grain that comes up " a new body as it hath pleased him." All this he sets forth to illustrate the resurrection of the human body from the grave, and the new body which will be given to each one in the resurrection. Then in the 39th, 40th and 41st verses he wrote of different bodies with their different glories, and this he did to illustrate the differences between the old body that is buried in the earth and the new body that will be given in the resurrection. Those differences are

stated in the 42nd, 43rd and 44th verses, and are summed up in the 45th verse and onward to the end of the 49th verse. Then in the 50th verse Paul introduced the declaration that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” and that “neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” This is followed by mention of the “mystery” of the change which will be made in the bodies of both the living and the dead saints when Christ will come and sound the trumpet of God. See also 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

Who are referred to in the declaration “we shall be changed, as recorded in the last of the 52nd verse? By that declaration Paul referred to the living saints who will be on the earth when Christ will come again. Did not Paul know that he would not then be alive? He did, but he was assured by divine revelation that the Church with which he was connected would be in existence at that time, and upon that basis he could justly say, “and we shall be changed.”

When will death be “swallowed up in victory”? In the 54th verse Paul informs us that it will be when the “corruptible” bodies of the saints will have put on the “incorruptible” bodies which will be given to them in the resurrection. Then will the redeemed ask, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

What is revealed in the 56th verse? The revelation here is, that “the sting of death” is caused by sin, for if man had not sinned then death would not have been inflicted on mankind. Therefore the strength, or sinfulness, of sin is determined by the law which revealed sin. See Romans 7:7. But is not sin determined by the New Testament law as well as by the Jewish law? Certainly. All violation of law, even the law of charity, is sin. See 1 Corinthians 8:12.

What “victory” is referred to in the 57th verse? That victory over “sin” and “death,” and the “grave,” which the redeemed have, and will have, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And what may we learn by considering the 58th verse? We may learn that Paul exhorted the saints at Corinth to be “steadfast,” and even “unmoveable” against error, and to be “always abounding in the work of the Lord.” This means that he gave them a negative also an affirmative exhortation. Are both exhortations important for Christians to consider now? They are. Some try to abound in the work of the Lord who are not steadfast against

doing wrong. Others are steadfast against wrong who are not disposed to be diligent in the work of the Lord. Those

who make up the former class try to balance their wrongs by doing much that is right, while those who make up the latter class try to balance their lack of right by denouncing what is wrong. Both classes will be lost if they do not repent and adopt the exhortation which Paul here gives. May this verse be safely used against those who oppose Bible readings in the meeting-house, and oppose teaching children on Lord's day in classes? It may be thus used. The expression, "always abounding in the work of the Lord," condemns all who oppose teaching persons in the Scriptures at any time or place that is favorable for such teaching.

Is it still true that the labor of Christians in the Lord shall not be in vain? It is. All their labors in the Lord will do them good even if others will not suffer themselves to be benefitted. Besides, as the word of the Lord is intended to save the obedient and condemn the disobedient (Isaiah 55:10, 11; 2 Corinthians 2:15, 16), the conclusion is unavoidable that the labors of Christians in making known the word of the Lord shall not be "in vain." Whenever and wherever made known the word of the Lord will either save or condemn. It will save those who accept it, and condemn those who reject it.

CHAPTER XVI

What is set forth for Bible readers in this chapter, the last of the document we are now considering? In this chapter the Apostle Paul sets forth his "order" to the church at Corinth, even as he had given it "to the churches of Galatia," in regard to the Lord's day contribution. He then made mention of the church at Corinth approving certain ones "by letters," and that He would send such to Jerusalem to take the "liberality" of the Corinthian brethren, or he would take them with him if he should decide that he ought to go. He then informed those brethren of the time when he would go to them, and that he would spend the winter with them, and then would be taken onward by them. He then expressed his purpose to tarry at Ephesus, and mentioned his reason for having proposed to tarry there. Paul then made mention of Timotheus, and how the brethren at Corinth should treat him if he would come to them, and the reason why they should thus treat him. Next Paul made mention of Apollos, and then addressed the brethren thus: "Watch ye, stand fast

in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all things be done in charity.” Next Paul besought the brethren in regard to the household of Stephanas, and how they should act with reference to such. This is followed by Paul's expression of gladness because Stephanas and certain other brethren had come to him, for they had supplied that which was lacking on the part of the church in regard to his support. In the remainder of the chapter Paul makes mention of certain other disciples, exhorts them, and pronounces a curse on those who did not love the Lord Jesus Christ. This is followed by his benediction, and an expression of his love in Christ Jesus for all those at Corinth whom he addressed.

What may we say of the beginning of this chapter? Paul here sets forth his instruction to the saints at Corinth in regard to the “collection for the saints” at Jerusalem. Why was it necessary to take up a collection for them? See Acts 11:27-30. What may we say of that method of raising money? It was the Lord's method, and we may safely decide that it was the best; and as it was then so it is now. To give often, in small sums, is easier for the masses than to give seldom and in large sums. What will be the result if disciples pretend to give as the Lord has prospered them and don't do so, but withhold half, or more than half, of that which they should give? The danger is that they will be brought under condemnation. Ananias and his wife were killed because they acted a lie in pretending to give all the price of that which they had sold, when they gave only a part. This suggests that the Lord may condemn us if we give only according to a part of our prosperity, and yet pretend that we give according to it all. The question of giving is, therefore, a severe and dangerous question, and should be considered with utmost care. The divine directions on this question are a very severe test, and the danger is that multitudes of disciples will be condemned by it in the last day.

What may we say of the exhortation recorded in the 13th and 14th verses of this chapter? It was wholesome for the church at Corinth, and is wholesome for all churches of Christ now in existence.

And what of the 15th verse? It is in opposition to the idea that households must have infants, or little children in them. The household of Stephanas (chapter 1:16) consisted of persons who when Paul wrote to Corinth had “addicted themselves to the ministry,” or had begun to be workers in the church.

But what of the 17th verse? Paul informs us, in that verse, that certain brethren had supplied him with that which the church had failed to give. This indicates that individual giving, besides the Lord's day contribution, is right. Was Paul one of the poor saints? Yes, and faithful preachers of the Gospel, generally, are poor. May not the regular contributions of the church be, therefore, given to a faithful preacher? Certainly. And such a preacher may be supported by individual giving besides, or independent of, the Lord's day contribution.

What of the “holy kiss” mentioned in the 20th verse? The command to greet with a “holy kiss” is like the command, “honor the king”—all right where it applies, but wrong when it does not apply. The command, in each instance, was intended to regulate a custom wherever it existed, and not to create a custom where it did not exist. Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be. to the end.

SECOND CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER I

What is the chief bearing of the letter which we now begin to consider, and of the chapter with which it is begun? The chief bearing of this letter may be expressed in the words “consolation,” “instruction,” “correction,” and “warning,” and the chapter now before us is an indication of that bearing.

What is the chief difference between this letter and the one which precedes it? The 1st letter was chiefly intended to be corrective, and instructive, but the letter now before us was intended to be consoling as well as instructive and corrective.

After Paul's introductory, what do we next find in this letter? We find that he began to write of the consolation which he had received of God, when he was in “tribulation,” and the advantage that it gave to him in consoling others who were “in any trouble.”

What did Paul mean by stating that “the sufferings of Christ” abounded in him? He must have meant that which is mentioned in Acts 9:16, and Colossians 1:24. In other words, Christ intended that Paul should be an example of suffering, and of deliverance from affliction, so that he might comfort all who would be required to suffer for Christ's name. This is indicated in the 6th verse of this chapter, likewise in the 7th. See also 1 Timothy 1:16.

What is mentioned in the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th verses? Paul's sufferings in Asia are mentioned, also the help rendered to him by the prayers of the church at Corinth.

And what may we say of the 12th, 13th and 14th verses of this chapter? In the 12th verse mention is made of Paul's rejoicing because he had conducted himself while at Corinth “in simplicity and godly sincerity.” This indicates that which is true of all other preachers, and of Christians generally. We always rejoice when we behave ourselves “in simplicity and godly sincerity,” and we rejoice whenever we think of such behavior on our part. In the 13th and 14th verses Paul made mention of that which he wrote, and which the saints at Corinth acknowledged, and he 470

trusted they would acknowledge to the end of their pilgrimage. To this he added a statement of the of act that they had acknowledged him in part, also that he was their rejoicing, even as they were his rejoicing. What do such statements indicate concerning the relationship between Paul and the saints at Corinth? The indication is that he was dear to them and they were dear to him. In chapter 12:15 we learn more on this subject.

And what of the 15th and 16th verses? In them Paul made mention of the “confidence” with which he purposed to visit Corinth again, also that they might be again benefitted by him, and that he might pass from them into Macedonia, then return to them, and by them be taken on his way “toward Judea.”

What may we learn by considering the 17th, 18th and 19th verses? We may learn that Paul implied that he did not “use lightness” in his purposes, nor did he “purpose according to the flesh,” so that there should be need of change from yes to no, or from one condition of mind to the opposite. Then he declared that Christ, who had been preached among them, was “not yea and nay.” That is to say, Christ was not a changeable character, but was always the same. See also Hebrews 13:8. What do such declarations imply? They imply that if Paul had “used lightness,” or had purposed “according to the flesh,” then he would have needed to change. This implies also that all others who “use lightness,” or, in a trivial manner render decisions, and those who form purposes “according to the flesh,” will need to change. Is this, generally, true in the history of mankind? It is. Solomon declared, “Every purpose is established by counsel.” (Proverbs 20:18.) This intimates that without counsel purposes are not established. What is the best counsel that mankind can have in regard to the formation and execution, or planning and carrying out, of their purposes? The counsel of the Bible is the best that they can have. It is best for them to adopt the counsels of God and Christ, as set forth in the Bible, as their counsels. Then they will never need to change, except to learn those counsels more thoroughly, and live according to them more diligently, as they become older in years, and more devoted in religious life. The word of God never changes. Its Author is unchanged and unchangeable, the same “yesterday, today and forever.” Therefore those who accept that Word do not need to meet to revise their creeds, or confessions of faith, as do the advocates of religious systems that are not authorized of heaven. On the contrary,

those who accept the word of God, as their religious creed, without human additions, subtractions, or modifications, are sure and steadfast, and never need to modify. This is a blessedness not known to those who adopt man-made creeds, confessions of faith, or disciplines, in religion. While they continue to do right their confidence is always the same. They are established. And this brings us to the 21st and 22nd verses of this chapter. Paul here declares, “Now he who stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

What is meant by the expression “earnest of the Spirit,” as recorded in the 23rd verse? The word “earnest” means pledge. Business men often bind a bargain by a pledge in the form of money, which they speak of as “earnest money.” Instead of having witnesses to a bargain, or writing a contract, the one who makes an agreement with another to purchase his stock, for instance, hands to him one, or two, hundred dollars, or even more, to bind the bargain. The sum of money thus handed over is a pledge, and thus illustrates, in some measure, what is meant by the word “earnest” in the text before us. God gives to his people a pledge by an impartation of his Spirit. See Galatians 4:6, also Ephesians 1:13, 14.

What does this impartation of the Spirit *do* for those who receive it? It enables them to call on God as their “Father” with a confidence that they could not otherwise have. See Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6. This impartation of the Spirit does not instruct Christians so that they do not need to study the written Word in order to learn their duty, nor, in any measure, does it take the place of the written Word. But it is declared to be “the Spirit of adoption” whereby Christians address God as their “Father.” The plainness of the divine testimony on this question should be accepted by all Bible readers.

What is the bearing of the 23rd and 24th verses? Their bearing is that Paul delayed his journey to Corinth in order to give the church there opportunity to repent of its errors before he would visit it. In his former letter he reproved that church for several sins, and he desired that it should repent of them all before he would go to Corinth. Then in the last verse he explained by saying, “Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand.” That is to say, he wished the brethren at Corinth to know that not as a dictator, but as a friend, he wrote to them.

CHAPTER II

Of *what* are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of Paul's determination with reference to the condition of mind with which he would go to Corinth, also the condition of mind and purpose that he had when he wrote his former letter to the brethren there. Then we are informed of the assurance and precaution that he gave with reference to some one among them who had done wrong, and needed forgiveness. Information is also given of the reasons for his assurance and precaution. Next we find mention made of Paul's condition of mind when he came to Troas because he did not find Timothy. Then we find an expression of thanksgiving from Paul, a declaration of that which he and certain others are to those who are saved by the truth, also to those who reject it, and, as a result, are lost. The chapter is ended with the declaration that Paul was "not as many who corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God" when he spoke in Christ.

What may we learn by considering the first four verses of this chapter? We may learn that the church at Corinth had a very deep hold on Paul's heart. He was in "heaviness" because of the sins of that church, and he "determined" that he would not again visit it "in heaviness." For that reason he delayed his visit, in order to give time for repentance on the part of the wrong doers in that church. He wrote also as if the church at Corinth had much to do in making him glad, or in making him sorry. This further indicates that it held a deep hold on his heart. The 4th verse indicates this in a very emphatic and touching manner.

What is the idea set forth in the 5th verse? The idea here is, that Paul wished to assure the brethren at Corinth that he who had caused grief had not grieved him, except "in part," or had grieved him somewhat, but not very seriously, and that he thus assured them that they might not feel distressed on account of his grief. To this he added, "sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many," or by the disapproval of many. Then he wrote that they should "forgive him, and comfort him" in order that he might not be "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. "

What person in the church at Corinth did Paul refer to in thus writing? The man mentioned in the 5th chapter of the former letter, we may reasonably suppose. That

which Paul here wrote indicates that he repented when he was informed of his mistake, and that his repentance was so sincere that Paul feared he might be overwhelmed with sorrow. Is there much danger of wrong doers being overwhelmed with sorrow for their wrongs in this generation? No. The chief danger is that they will not be sufficiently sorry, but will pass over their sins without true repentance. Mankind can be made to feel sorrow for sin in proportion as they have strong convictions of right and wrong. But we should not suppose that those who are most expressive in regard to their sins are those who really feel the most sorrow. Impulsive persons often give expression to their feelings which are very intense for a while, but they soon recover from them. Yet we are not to sit in judgment on the depth of penitence, nor on the sincerity, of those who profess repentance. On the contrary, we should consider them all with the charity that "thinketh no evil."

What may we say of the 8th verse of the chapter before us? In that verse Paul besought the brethren at Corinth to "confirm" their love toward the offender to whom he referred. Does this apply to us? It does. Whenever a person shows signs of repentance we should recognize it, and endeavor to appreciate it, and be careful to avoid all reflections against that person.

Why was Paul careful to write to the church at Corinth on this question? The expression, "That I might know the proof of you," as found in the 9th verse, gives an explanation, and so does the 11th verse. Do we need to be careful "lest Satan should get an advantage of us"? We certainly do, for he has many devices.

What may we say of Paul's conduct in leaving the work at Troas when "a door was opened" unto him "of the Lord," and going after Titus? He showed his love for Titus, also showed his human nature. He thought so much of a fellow-preacher that he left the Lord's work, at a certain place, and went in search for that preacher. The 14th verse indicates that he found Titus.

What may we learn by considering the 15th and 16th verses? We may learn of the different ends which the word of God is destined to accomplish among mankind. In Isaiah 55:10, 11 we find another statement that bears in this direction, likewise in Hebrews 6:7, 8. In this part of Isaiah's writings just referred to we find the declaration that God's word shall not return to him without accomplishing that for which it was sent. But this does not mean that

all to whom it has come, or will come, will be finally saved. On the contrary, Hebrews 6:7, 8 indicate that the obedient and disobedient of mankind are likened unto two kinds of soil on which the rain falls. One bears good fruit, and the other brings forth evil fruit, by receiving the rain. This illustrates that some persons are made better by reading and hearing the word of God, while others are made worse. All those are made better who receive the Word kindly, and bring themselves in subjection to it, while all others are made worse. When God's word is brought to bear on the minds of mankind they must either yield to it, or rebel against it. If they yield to it unreservedly, then it benefits and saves them; but if they rebel against it, then they become hardened, and that very word will finally judge and condemn them. See John 12:48. In view of this we learn what Paul meant when he said to those who are saved he was "the savor of life unto life," while to those who perish he was "the savor of death unto death."

What is the meaning of the word "savor" in this connection? The Greek word means "sweet smell, grateful odor, fragrance," and the use here made of it implies that faithful preaching of the Gospel is, unto God, a delight to him, whether it saves or condemns. God made man and placed him on trial, and it is to God's honor and glory to make known his Word to man whether he accepts it, or rejects it. This being true the preaching of the Gospel, and all other work in the Lord, is destined to succeed. It will succeed in saving the obedient and in condemning the disobedient. Paul refers to this in 1 Corinthians 15:58, when he declares, "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

What may we say of the last verse of this chapter? It informs us that "many" had become corrupters of the Word, while Paul was on the earth, in person, but declares that he was not of that number. How, and why, did persons then become corrupters of the divine Word? By the same method and for the same reason that many are now guilty of corrupting it. First of all, they remain ignorant of it. Secondly, that which they learn of it they do not consider with reverence, and apply to themselves. Thirdly, the reason of all this is that they wish to have their own way, and, as a rule, desire to be popular with their fellow mortals. See John 12:42, 43, also Romans 1:21, 23. Yielding to self-conceit, and to a desire to be popular, are the dispositions which, above all others, control those who corrupt the word of God. But what is meant by the word "corrupt" in this connection? The

Greek word here translated “corrupt,” in its noun form, means “a retailer, a huckster;” and as hucksters had the reputation of increasing their profits by adulterating their commodities which they offered for sale, the word, as here used, means “to corrupt, adulterate.” This suggests the idea that those who now “corrupt” the word of God by mixing human ideas with it, in offering it to mankind, are religious hucksters, and should be so regarded. Such is the character of those who preach salvation by faith only, grace only, Spirit only, and works only. They add the word “only” to the divine doctrine and thus corrupt that doctrine. The same is true of all others who add to God's word, take from it, modify it, or re-arrange it, in any measure or degree. They are religious hucksters, and the only plan by which mankind can be saved from the evils which are sure to result from following them is to read, and study, the Bible for themselves. By so doing they will learn enough to expose those hucksters in every adulteration that they make, and thereby drive them out of business. Those who will not study the Bible, but follow those hucksters, are in danger, for “If the blind lead the blind they shall both fall into the ditch.” (Matthew 15:14.)

CHAPTER III

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed of that which Paul here set forth in regard to commendations, and letters of commendation, and then concerning the difference between the Old Testament and the New. This is followed by a few remarks concerning the blindness of the Jews in reading the Old Testament, and an implication that their blindness shall end. The chapter is ended with certain remarks concerning the Spirit of the Lord, liberty, beholding the Lord, and being changed into the image of the Lord.

What is implied in the first of this chapter? The implication is, that letters of commendation of the right kind are scriptural. See Acts 18:27. What else is here set forth? Paul declares that the brethren at Corinth were his epistle, written in his heart, known and read of all men. This implies that the church at Corinth was very dear to him, also that the people of the world, who knew the members of that church, could read the doctrine of Christ in the lives of those members.

Is it true now that the people of the world, with whom Christians associate, read them? Yes, and they read the

doctrine of Christ in them, and through them. Paul's epistle to the unbelievers at Corinth consisted of the saints at Corinth, and Christ's epistles to the world of mankind consist of Christians wherever found. We may think that worldlings do not read the Bible much, and thus it is. They do not take the book, known as the Bible, and read it, as a rule, but they read the Bible that is manifest in the lives of Christians. Besides, they are able to discover wherein hypocrites lack in the right principles that are taught in the Bible. Then let us not deceive ourselves in regard to the people of the world reading the Bible. They may not read it in the book known as "the Bible," but they do read it in the lives of professed Christians. Then let all professed Christians be careful that all who know them shall read the Bible aright in them, and through them.

How does "the Spirit of the living God" write "in the fleshly tables of the hearts," as is stated in the 3rd verse? The word "wrote," or "written," in such connection, is figurative, and is intended to express the idea of making known in a definite manner. To those who were specially inspired the Spirit made known the truth in a direct manner. See Acts 10:19, 20, as an instance. But to those who are not specially inspired by the Holy Spirit the truth is now made known by the written word. Therefore, in order for the Holy Spirit to make known the truth to such it is necessary for them to hear the written word repeated or read, and to study that word. By so doing the Spirit will speak to their minds, and, thereby, reach their hearts, or affections, and move their wills to obey the divine requirements. See Nehemiah 9:30; Acts 2:4; also 1 Corinthians 14:37. In the 5th verse of this chapter Paul intimates that he and others were not to depend on themselves in regard to the question of which he was writing, for he declared, "Our sufficiency is of God."

And what shall we say of the 6th verse, and onward to the end of the 11th? In these verses we find the Jewish law and the Gospel contrasted in a manner which should have prevented all confusion in regard to them. In Romans 10:4 Paul declares, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes." This should be sufficient to prevent all who read the Bible from supposing that the Old Testament should be used in the Gospel Age, except as a book of history. But here we find that it is designated "the letter the ministration of death," "the ministration of condemnation," and as that which, in contrast with the Gospel, "had no glory," and which

“is done away,” and “is abolished.” On the other hand, the New Testament is designated as “the Spirit,” “the ministration of the Spirit,” “the ministration of righteousness the glory that excelleth that which remaineth.” *In* view of all this, how can any one, possessing common sense and common honesty, suppose that the law, written “in tables of stone,” is now binding on Christians? The answer to this question is, that either common sense, or common honesty, or both, must be discarded by all who contend that the law written “in tables of stone” is now binding, except as it has been re-enacted by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles and inspired evangelists. But *why* do any professed Christians contend for the authority of the Jewish *law*, or any part of it, except as it is re-enacted by the *Holy* Spirit in the Gospel? They do so in order to find a show of scripture for certain items of their doctrine and practice. Thus if the Roman Catholic priest is requested to cite authority for his pope, his priesthood, his priestly robes, his altar, his incense, and his musical instruments in his worship, he will answer that in the Old Testament we find there was a high priest, with a priesthood, that wore priestly robes; likewise that in the Jewish worship there were altars, incense, and musical instruments. In one respect, or more than one, Protestant denominations, generally, have imitated Rome in regard to such things. Especially is this true in regard to instrumental music. As a result of such appeals to the Old Testament there seems to be but one Church in existence that, practically, accepts the declaration that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe,” and but one that, practically, accepts the contrasts between the law and the Gospel, as set forth in the chapter we are now considering. That Church is the Church of Christ, or Church of God, which consists of “the churches of Christ” that are opposed to the use of instrumental music in the worship, and to all human devices in religious work.

What may we say of the 12th verse, and onward to the end of the 16th? In the 12th verse Paul declared that he used “great plainness of speech,” and did not “put a vail over his face” as Moses did. Then he intimates that “the vail” which Moses put on indicated the blindness of the Jewish mind in reading the Old Testament. Next we are informed that “the vail” which Moses put on is “done away in Christ.” This is followed by the implication that the Jewish nation “shall turn to the Lord,” and then the plain

statement is made that at that time “the vail shall be taken away.”

Is there any excuse for Gentiles who read the Old Testament with the Jewish vail on their minds? No. They might all learn that it is a record of shadows which were fulfilled in

Christ. This is plainly indicated in the declaration, “For Christ is the end of the law of or righteousness to every one that believes.” (Romans 10:4.) But instead of reading the Old Testament, with only a vail on, some of them seem to have a blanket over their minds. What *is* the explanation of such condition of mind? They do not take the Old Testament in its order of history, law, and prophecy. But many of them try to understand the prophecy, recorded in the Old Testament, before they have understood the law, or even the history that is therein recorded. As a result, they are in confusion concerning it, and will thus remain, till they will read it aright.

What should we say to those who plead for liberty to do as they please because they think they have the Spirit of the Lord? We should remind them that Paul wrote in another place thus: “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” (Galatians 5:13.) This does not mean for Christians to do as they please regardless of one another. Neither does it mean that we may gratify our desire for pleasure, or popularity, and plead that we are only exercising our “liberty.” On the contrary, it means that we should serve each other's best interests because we love each other. Nor is this all. For those who live in the period of perfected revelation the Spirit of the Lord is in his Word, and not outside of his Word. This being true, our liberty is restricted by the written Word. We are bound up, and down, and in and under, to the divine testimony.

What may we say of the last verse of this chapter? It indicates the clear light in which Christians may view “the glory of the Lord” and “may be changed into the same image from glory to glory.” And how may *this* be accomplished? It may be accomplished by obedience to the Gospel in its first requirements, followed by wholehearted devotion to God and Christ, as required in the epistolary writings. In Romans 12:1, 2 Paul indicates that which is necessary in order that we may be “changed into the same image from glory to glory.”

CHAPTER IV

Of what are we here informed? The Apostle Paul here makes mention of his ministry, and of its effect on him, then mentions what he had done, and what he had not done. This is followed by certain statements concerning the Gospel which he had preached, and the condition of those who were lost. Next we find statements concerning Paul's preaching, and a command of God in regard to spiritual light, and the divine treasure. Then we find a record of Paul's afflictions which he suffered for the Gospel's sake, and of his hope in regard to the resurrection. The favorable condition of the church at Corinth is next mentioned, also the difference between the afflictions suffered for the Gospel's sake, and the glory which the faithful shall finally enjoy. The chapter is ended with a statement of the difference between the things of time and those of eternity.

What may we learn by considering the 2nd verse of this chapter? We may learn that Paul regarded his life as an open book, and, therefore, he did not hesitate to state what he had "renounced" nor what he advocated. In the latter part of this verse a truth is mentioned which is of universal application. That truth is this: Those who live the kind of life that the Gospel recommends will commend themselves to every one's conscience in the sight of God. That is to say, the kind of life that the Gospel requires of Christians will be regarded as the right kind of a life in all ages and in all countries. It is that kind of life which common sense universally commends.

What may we say of the 3rd and 4th verses? They describe the character of those to whom the Gospel is hid. Infidels are first, and covetous persons are second, in those of whom Paul here wrote. Those who love popular applause are next in the list of the "blinded" ones. Those who depend on morality are of the same class, and so are those who think they can be saved by good works without believing and obeying the Gospel.

And what of the 5th verse? Paul here sets forth that which is in direct opposition to the disposition of many preachers. Many who occupy the position of preachers seem disposed to preach themselves rather than Christ. At least they strive for their own popularity, and seem more disposed to lead persons to talk about them than to talk about Christ. In opposition to this Paul wrote, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

What of the 6th verse? It refers to that which had been accomplished in the Apostles by the Holy Spirit which had been given unto them. The expression, “face of Jesus Christ,” means with his approval, or according to his provision in the Gospel. Then the 7th verse. indicates that the Gospel was committed to men, who, as “earthen vessels,” carried it about, and made it known to mankind. This was the divine arrangement in order that the good accomplished might be evidently to God's honor. If the Lord had chosen angels to preach his Gospel among mankind the results might have been charged to angels rather than to God.

What may we say of the 8th verse, and onward to the end of the 12th? In those verses Paul makes mention of trials that he endured for the Gospel's sake, also that he had not been overwhelmed by those trials. In the 10th verse he informs us that he had suffered somewhat as Jesus did when he was condemned to die, and, probably, referred to the fact that Jesus was scourged before he was crucified, and that he had been whipped by the Jews. See Mark 15:15; 2 Corinthians 11:24.

The life of Jesus was a life of suffering for man's sake, and Paul's life was one of suffering for Jesus' sake, also for an example to Christians. As a result the life of suffering which Jesus endured was “made manifest” in Paul's body, and, as a further result, death worked in him, but it meant life for the Church. Christians in all ages have been much encouraged to endure trials by the record of Paul's endurance of trials.

What is indicated in the 13th and 14th verses? The indication here is that Paul was moved by “faith” to endure all that had come upon him because he had “spoken” the truth of the Gospel.

What may we say of the 15th verse? It should be read in connection with 1 Corinthians 3:21, 22. These scriptures together indicate that to establish the Church, and maintain the Church, was the chief end which God had in view in all that the New Testament reveals. And this indicates that it was the chief end which He had in view when he established the Jewish and Patriarchal ages, for those ages pointed forward to the New Testament Church. In Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:10, 11, 21, Paul gives to us further information on this subject. In all such, and such like, teaching the Holy Spirit indicates that the Church of God, which is made up of “the churches of Christ,” may be

safely declared to be the end which God had in view when he created this world, and made man its earthly ruler. Moreover, the Church may be safely declared to be the perfection of God's wisdom and benevolence as manifested toward mankind.

What may we learn by considering the 16th and 17th verses? In the 16th Paul informs us that we are made up of two men—an “outward man” and an “inward man,” also that these are so different from each other that while the one may “perish,” or grow weaker, “day by day,” yet the man that is “inward” may be “renewed” “day by day.” This teaching reveals to us that which should prevent us from accepting the doctrine of materialists, namely, that man is wholly mortal, and only consists of well-mixed clay, animated by common air, and energized by electricity. This teaching should have prevented such a doctrine from originating in the minds of Bible readers, and should purge such doctrines from the minds of all who hold it. In Zechariah 12:1 we are informed that the spirit of man is a divine formation within the man, and thus within the body that is commonly designated “the man.”

And in the 16th verse of the chapter under consideration we learn that man is partly made up of an “inward man,” which is so different from the “outward man” that it may be designated as the opposite. Why, then, should any one conclude that man is entirely mortal, and that when his body dies then he is entirely unconscious? Such a conclusion cannot be reached by any one without a disregard of divine revelation on this subject, likewise the use of common sense, and honesty, in considering it.

In the 17th verse of this chapter the trials of this life are designated “our light affliction,” and such they are when compared with “the wages of sin,” and the time we are required to endure them is as a moment when compared with eternity. Paul informs us that these afflictions, when endured, work out for us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” This implies that the more we endure, patiently, the greater will be our rejoicing in eternity.

And what may we say of the last verse of this chapter? In it the Apostle Paul summed up all of which he had been writing in this chapter that pertains to this world as “things that are seen,” and all those that pertain to the world to come as “things that are not seen.” In thus writing he declares of “things that are seen,” of whatever class, “are temporal,” or belong to time, while the things that are

not seen “are eternal,” or pertain to the ages of eternity. in view of this, the statement needs only to be made, in order to be understood and admitted, that our chief concern should be with reference to “the things that are not seen,” and thus “are eternal.” If we give ourselves wholly, or, even, chiefly, to the things of this world, we shall be disappointed in the end. In 2 Peter 3:10, 11 we find wholesome instructions on this question.

CHAPTER V

Of what are we informed in this chapter? This is a chapter of consolation to Christians, accompanied with instruction and warning. Paul first of all informs us here of the blessed condition of Christians when their earthly bodies shall cease to live, and then declares that, on this account, he was “always confident.” The fact that Christians “walk by faith, not by sight,” is next declared, and this is followed by a declaration of his confidence and of the result of his confidence in causing him to labor. Then we find that which may be designated a warning, followed by statements of Paul concerning being “manifest unto God” and unto the “consciences” of the Christians at Corinth. Commendation, glorying, being sober, being influenced by the love of Christ, the death of Christ for all mankind, knowing Christ after the flesh, being a new creature, being reconciled to God, being ambassadors for Christ—these subjects are next mentioned. The chapter is ended with a statement concerning Christ being “made sin,” or a sin offering, for us, though he was sinless, in order that we might be “the righteousness of God in him.”

Of what did Paul write in the beginning of this chapter? He wrote of the hope of the Christian in regard to death and the resurrection, declaring that when our earthly body shall fail by reason of death we are not without hope, because God will give us another body, which is designated a “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” The ending of the 4th verse indicates this as the apostle's meaning. See 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54, for in that scripture the apostle certainly declares that the change from mortality to immortality, or eternal life, will be accomplished in the resurrection.

In view of such declarations, is there any reason for Christians to become discouraged? No. The 6th verse informs us that we should be “always confident,” for Paul declared that he was “always confident.”

What may we say of the 7th verse? It declares that which should always be true of Christians. They should always “walk by faith, not by sight,” nor by any other sense, nor even by reason. They must walk by faith, regardless of that which sense or reason suggests, if they would always please the Lord.

Does the 8th verse of this chapter teach that as soon as the spirit of the Christian leaves the body it is at once in the final abode of the redeemed? It does not so teach. The 6th and 8th verses, when taken together, only teach what they declare, and that is this: “Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord,” and that “we are * * willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord,” but this does not mean that as soon as the spirit leaves the body it is in heaven. The divine teaching concerning an interval between death and the resurrection must not be ignored. See I Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. But the 9th verse indicates that we should be chiefly concerned about doing the Lord's will so that “whether present or absent we may be accepted of Him.”

And what may we say of the 10th verse? It may be designated a warning. We may refuse to appear at many places here on earth, but we cannot refuse to “appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” Hebrews 9:27 should be read in this connection, for in that scripture the declaration is made that both death and the judgment are of divine appointment.

May we safely infer, from the 10th verse now before us, that good deeds will save persons in the judgment regardless of obedience to the Gospel? No. Obedience to the Gospel is one of the “good” deeds in a Godward direction that we must do in order to be saved.

What may we learn by considering the 11th verse? We may learn that, by reason of that which Paul wrote of as “the terror of the Lord,” he persuaded men—and this implies that—for the same reason we should “persuade men.” On account of God's “terror” we should feel deeply concerned for the salvation of all mankind.

What is indicated in the last part of the 11th verse. The Greek word here translated by the expression “made manifest” means “to cause to appear, bring to light, to shine, to be seen, appear, be visible.” In view of such shades of meaning the latter part of this verse indicates that Paul regarded himself as clearly known to God, and he expressed

a desire to be clearly known to his brethren in Corinth. This desire is common in all those who are honest. Dishonest persons do not wish to be known by their fellow mortals, and they do not like to think that God knows them. They should read the 139th division of the Book of Psalms.

To whom did Paul refer when he used the expression “glory in appearance,” as recorded in the 12th verse? In chapter 11:9-15 Paul informs us of certain pretenders who preached without asking support of the church, and who gloried in so doing, and to them he seems to have referred in this verse.

But why did Paul use the expression “beside ourselves” in the 13th verse of this chapter? In chapter 11:16, 17 he informs us by using the words “fool” and “foolishly” with reference to himself. He seemed to think that his anxiety, in behalf of the saints at Corinth, might seem to them as if he was “beside” himself, or was a “fool.” But he knew the danger to which they were exposed better than they did themselves. Therefore he pleaded with them to bear with him in his “folly,” as his anxiety might seem to them. See chapter 11:1. In the 14th and 15th verses of the chapter under review he mentions an additional reason for his anxiety.

What may we say of the 16th and 17th verses of this chapter? In these verses Paul declares a just conclusion from that which he stated in the 14th and 15th verses. That is to say, he declares that as “all were dead,” and Christ “died for all,” therefore the spiritual welfare, and not the fleshly relation, of all should be considered. He even declared that he would not “henceforth” know Christ after the flesh, or esteem him specially because he was a Jew, and thus was his brother according to the flesh.

In what sense is it true that “if any man be in Christ he is a new creature,” and that “all things are become new”? Only in the spiritual sense is this true. A man who is engaged in an honorable business may become a Christian and not make any outward change, except in his confession and baptism and his presence and participation in the Lord's day worship. Yet he is in a new family and a new kingdom; he is under new laws and has a new Master; he has new duties and new privileges, new joys, new hopes and new aspirations.

What may we say of the 18th, 19th and 20th verses? In them we are informed that Paul and his brother apostles were “ambassadors” for Christ, who had been sent to man

kind with “the ministry of reconciliation,” to hear “the word of reconciliation,” in order to lead mankind to become “reconciled to God.” The Greek word here translated “reconciliation,” means “a restoration to favor,” and is used in this connection because mankind had, by reason of sin, passed out of the full favor of God and needed to be restored to His favor. In view of this, what may we say of those religionists who teach, by song and prayer, and perhaps otherwise, that God needs to be reconciled to mankind? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” Their mistake, in this respect, is very serious and is the very reverse of the divine teaching on this subject. And what may we say of those preachers who speak of themselves as “ambassadors for Christ”? They do not understand themselves nor the word of God on this subject. As a result, they imagine that they are successors of the Apostles, sent forth with power to transact business for Christ. This is the consummation of ignorance and arrogance, on which the Romish priesthood is established, and which is found, in a modified form, in most Protestant denominations.

In what sense was it true that Christ was made to be “sin for us”? He was made a sin-offering for us. See Isaiah 53:6, 9, 12, and Galatians 3:13. The expression, “made him to be sin for us,” in view of I Peter 2:22-24, cannot mean anything else than that Christ was condemned as a transgressor and died as a sin-offering in our behalf.

CHAPTER VI

“What saith the Scripture,” as found in this chapter? It says that Paul regarded himself as a worker together with Christ, and as such he besought the saints at Corinth that they should not let the grace of God they had received be “in vain.” This is followed by a quotation from Isaiah 19:8, in regard to God's acceptance of the Gentiles. Then we learn by the scripture, as here set forth, that Paul had a strict regard for the ministry which had been committed to him, that it should not be blamed. Next we find an account of that which he had endured. Then Paul addressed the “Corinthians” by name, and reproved them for their narrowness in regard to some phase, or phases, of their life as Christians. Finally, he commanded them against forming alliances with “unbelievers,” and reasoned with them on the subject, ending his reasoning with an exhortation and a promise.

Why did Paul, in the 2nd verse of this chapter, inject a

quotation from Isaiah 49:8 into his exhortation to the saints at Corinth, as here recorded? In Isaiah 49:6 mention is made of God's purpose concerning "the Gentiles," and for that reason the quotation that Paul here made was appropriate. The Gentiles had received the divine favor, and Paul, as an apostle, desired that it should not be received by them "in vain," but that they should make the best possible use of that which they had received. Besides, the doctrine in the mentioned quotation is that when God's favor is extended to mankind, then the time is at hand to make use of it without delay. This applies to all classes of mankind. When God speaks they should hear and obey. His time is their time, and should be so regarded by them at all times and in all circumstances.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd verse of this chapter, and onward to the end of the 10th? We may learn that Paul was disposed to be careful "that the ministry be not blamed." Even in the most trying circumstances he endeavored to conduct himself so as not to give any "offense in anything." What effect should this record of Paul have on all preachers of the Gospel, and on elders,

deacons, and all other members of the Church? It should cause them all to consider that they should regard the position they occupy and their relation to the church, and try to avoid all reproach or blame being brought upon it.

The idea of Christians, especially evangelists and the officers of a church, doing as they please or serving their own interests, regardless of their position, profession or relationship, is not only irreverent and foolish, but may be designated moral imbecility or moral insanity. Yet certain preachers, elders and deacons, with many other members of the church, often act as if they do not care any more about bringing reproach on their profession as Christians, on their position in the church, nor on the church itself, than if they were natural idiots or victims of insanity.

What may we say of Paul's declaration to the Corinthians, as found in the 11th, 12th and 13th verses? The 11th verse implies that he had done, and was willing to do, for them everything that he could possibly do for their good. This is further indicated in chapter 12:15. The 12th and 13th verses imply that they had not done their full duty toward him. This is intimated in chapter 11: 7, 8. To stop the mouths of certain pretenders, Paul desired to support himself, and the church at Corinth seemed willing that he should do so. See also 1 Corinthians 16:17. But he exhorted that church to be "enlarged" in regard to giving,

and he said this to prepare the members of that church for that which he intended to offer them on this subject.

Is it true of churches generally that they will allow preachers to support themselves while preaching to them? Yes, and in proportion as they do this they show that they do not consider the importance of being “workers together” with the preacher in his labor. On the contrary, they show that they are entirely indifferent to the idea of having “fellowship” with the preacher in his work and in its results. In many instances they feel under obligations to assist in supporting a preacher if he really needs it, but if he does not need it, then they are pleased to, keep their prosperity and use it for their own advantage. All who act thus are crusted in selfishness, and suggest the inquiry whether they are living so that they will be finally saved. They are selfish servants and not faithful servants. The danger is that they will all be condemned, if they do not repent. If the one who preaches for a church does not need support, yet the church should offer it to him. If he will not receive it, then it should be used to supply the wants of some needy saints or in helping to support other preachers in their efforts to build up other churches.

What may we say of the 14th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? We may say that the scripture which bids Christians to be “unequally yoked with unbelievers” implies that they may be “yoked” with them, but only for bids being “unequally yoked” with them. And what is here referred to? The connection shows that reference is made to the worship—Christians should not be yoked with unbelievers in their worship. Does this apply to secret orders? That depends on whether the secret orders referred to have any religious worship. If they do, then Christians should keep clear of them, because union with such in worship would be an “unequal” yoking. The question, “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” indicates that Paul had reference to Christians uniting with heathen in worship, and it indicates also that Christians should not unite in any kind of worship that is not authorized of Christ.

Does that which Paul here sets forth apply to the marriage relation? No. May Christians, therefore, marry persons of the world? This is like the question whether Christians may engage in any business which will likely cause them to neglect their duty as Christians. To engage in business is right, and to marry is right; but who have the right to do either when it will likely prevent them from continuing to be Christians? The only apparent exception to this is when a man

has a family to support and cannot do so without working on the Lord's day and staying away from the regular worship. In order to avoid the condemnation recorded in I Timothy 5:8, a man sometimes needs to work on the Lord's day and stay away from worship, but he is justified in so doing on the principle mentioned in Matthew 12:7, and in the expression, "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment," as recorded in James 2:13. Yet we do not find any such necessity in regard to the marriage relation, except, perhaps, in 1 Corinthians 7:9, which Paul wrote "by permission, and not of commandment." But even in such a necessity every Christian who desires to marry may rest assured that there is, at some place, another Christian, suitable for a companion, who also desires to marry. Therefore, the necessity of marrying a worldling or a sectarian does not exist. Nor is this all. The question whether Christians can think enough of worldlings or sectarians, to enter into the marriage relation with them, should be seriously considered. Many professed Christians have suffered their fancy, impulse, passion or selfishness, to induce them to enter into the marriage relation with worldlings or sectarians, perhaps with sectarian worldlings, and have learned, when too late, that they have sold their spiritual birthright for a mess of fleshly pottage, and perhaps a very inferior mess. As a result, they have lived a life of regret, and have finally been lost.

Should we then use that which Paul here says on the subject of being "unequally yoked", as if it certainly applies to the marriage relation? We should not. Yet that which Paul here sets forth on this subject, especially in the 17th verse, may be used as a basis for an argument or exhortation in that direction. For if Christians should not be joined to unbelievers in worship, they should not, of their own accord, join with unbelievers in a manner which will hinder them from worshipping God, nor in a manner which will likely result in hindering them.

What may we say of the exhortation and promise recorded in the last two verses of this chapter? The exhortation here recorded calls on Christians to separate themselves from idolaters, and the promise declares that God will receive those as his "sons and daughters" who obey this exhortation.

What is referred to in the expression "unclean things," as used in the 17th verse? Its first reference is to that which is idolatrous in worship, and it may be justly applied to all persons who have not been "washed", "sanctified", "justified", as the Corinthians were. See 1 Corinthians 6:11.

What then should those do who have made the mistake of joining themselves in marriage to worldlings or sectarians? That which Paul wrote “by permission, and not of commandment” on this subject, in 1 Corinthians 7:13-16, indicates that a believer may dwell with an unbeliever in the marriage relation, and yet be acceptable. Therefore, those who have made the mistake of entering into such relation should not become unscripturally sensitive, and break that relation, without a scriptural cause. See Matthew 19:9, which indicates that “fornication” is the only scriptural cause for divorce.

CHAPTER VII

What is set forth for Bible readers to learn in this chapter? An exhortation of Paul, based on divine promises, is first set forth. This is followed by a direct and personal appeal to the saints at Corinth, in which we find statements of Paul's devotion to them, and of his confidence in them. The report of them, which a man named Titus brought to him concerning them, is next recorded, and in connection with it mention is made of the effect which that report had on Paul's own mind. Then we find a record of that which Paul wrote to them in regard to their repentance and the joy it gave, him.

What was the basis, or foundation, of the exhortation found in the 1st verse of this chapter? The promises found in the last part of the preceding chapter are the basis. The promise that God would receive them, and that they should be his sons and daughters, is sufficient to justify the mentioned exhortation. Because Christians have the assurance that they are members of the divine family, they should certainly cleanse themselves “from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit”, and perfect “holiness in the fear of God.” What does this exhortation include? Galatians 5:19-21 informs us. Does it certainly include the use of tobacco? As bodily cleanliness is not in the list of “the works of the flesh”, mentioned by Paul in Galatians 5:19-21, we should not be positive on this question. Yet this is true: in proportion as Christians grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth they will condemn the use of tobacco. The same is true in regard to secret orders that are religious, and tolerating the strong drink traffic. All who are full of the Gospel will decide that they have riot any room for the mentioned practices, nor for any others that are wrong, or even doubtful. Some persons decide against all doubtful prac-

tices as soon as they obey the Gospel; others a month or a year afterward; while others may require several years to render such a decision. Therefore, we should not regard such practices as reasons for excluding persons from the church. On the contrary, we should bear in mind that Romans 14th chapter was intended to regulate Christians in regard to questions of privilege, or supposed privilege. Besides, in Romans 15:1 Paul commands those who are strong to “bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please” themselves.

What else do we find in this chapter that we need to consider in a special manner? The 10th verse needs to be thus considered, as it mentions two kinds of sorrow and their results. The expression “godly sorrow” means God-ward sorrow, or sorrow produced by the word of God, and which has a Godward bearing. Such sorrow the Corinthians felt when they learned what Paul set forth in his 1st letter to them. The Apostle Peter felt such sorrow on the occasion mentioned in Matthew 26:75. But the “sorrow of the world” was felt by Judas Iscariot. See Matthew 27:1-5. These two kinds of sorrow are common among mankind, especially the latter. Those who are sorry for their sins, because they have offended a kind heavenly Father, feel “godly sorrow,” or Godward sorrow; but those who feel “the sorrow of the world” are not sorry till they are forced to conclude that they have gone too far in their iniquity, and that they are caught, or are sure to be exposed.

What else may be said of this chapter? It sets forth Paul's expressions of rejoicings because of the report which Titus had brought to him of the repentance of the church at Corinth, and the esteem in which they held him, though he had reproved them for their wrongs. Was this a good reason for rejoicing? It was, for it indicated that the church at that place was wrong through ignorance and impulse, and not through perverseness. Such a church may be a church of Christ, or a church of God, even as a person who is wrong through ignorance or impulse may be a Christian. But when a church or a person is wrong, and refuses correction, or becomes angry when reproved, then the spirit of humility is lacking. Those who lack that spirit, and refuse to be convinced of wrong, or, being convinced, refuse to repent, are not Christians.

CHAPTER VIII

Of what are Bible readers here informed? We are informed first of all, that Paul made known to the saints at Corinth

the disposition of the churches in Macedonia in regard to giving for the support of the poor saints in Judea, likewise their desire that Paul should carry their bounty unto those saints. Next we are informed that Paul was anxious that, as the church in Corinth abounded in special gifts, so it would abound in giving also, and that, as it had previously expressed a willingness, so it would show a disposition to act accordingly. Information is next given to us in regard to Paul's teachings concerning "equality", and this is followed by certain remarks concerning a preacher named Titus, and another brother whom Paul sent with him to the Corinthians. Then we are informed of Paul's care to avoid "blame" in handling the bounty, or "fellowship" in giving, and of Paul's estimate of Titus, and the relation of certain brethren to the churches. The chapter is ended with an exhortation to the saints at Corinth to show to Titus, and to those with him, "the proof" of their love, and of his just "boasting" on their "behalf."

Were the churches in Macedonia liberal toward the poor saints in Judea? They were; and they gave to the extent of their power, and "beyond their power they were willing of themselves." Of what was this an evidence? It was an evidence of "the grace of God bestowed on" them. What should this teach us? The teaching is that liberality in giving to relieve the afflictions of poor saints is an evidence of the divine favor, as indicated by compassion for the poor.

Are preachers numbered with poor saints? They, generally, are, for Christians who are not poor very seldom have sufficient devotion to Christ, and to the welfare of mankind, to think of becoming preachers. In view of the fact that preachers are generally numbered with poor saints, what may we say of those who refuse to give to the support of Gospel preachers, or who say that the weekly contributions should not be given to them? All such are technical reasoners, and show a disposition against liberal giving for any part of the Lord's work. Besides, they seem disposed to ignore I Corinthians 9:14, which declares, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

What is indicated by the 8th verse of this chapter? The indication is that all of Paul's writing, based on the disposition of the churches in Macedonia to be liberal toward the poor saints in Judea, and resulting from his desire to have the saints at Corinth to make a manifestation of their love for those saints, was written by him, as a Christian, and not "by commandment" of the Lord. How much of his writ-

ing does this embrace? It seems to embrace the entire 8th and 9th chapters of this letter. This is further indicated by the word “advice” in the 10th verse of this chapter, and the expression “I thought” in chapter 9:5. This is in harmony with the expression “I suppose” in 1 Corinthians 7:26, which occurs in the midst of that which he expressly declares that he wrote “by permission, and not of commandment.” It is true that the words “suppose” and “think” are found in several instances in which the writers were under commandment of the Lord, but in each instance of that kind some other Greek word is used than those from which the expressions “I suppose” and “I think” are translated from in the passages to which reference has just been made. In view of this the conclusion seems safe that the entire 8th and 9th chapters of this letter were written by Paul as a Christian, and not “by commandment” of the Lord. These chapters are the outgrowth of Paul's anxiety that the church at Corinth should do its duty promptly, and not bring him to shame by any slowness on its part, especially as he had boasted of the readiness of that church to give for the poor saints in Judea. What may we learn from such anxiety on Paul's part? We may learn that he had regard for his own reputation as a boaster, also that there is danger in boasting even of one church to another.

But is not the doctrine of “equality”, as set forth in the 14th and 15th verses, in harmony with the divine teaching on this subject, as elsewhere recorded? It is; and it commends itself to the just judgment of mankind everywhere. Moreover, if the doctrine here set forth had always been observed by disciples they would not, in any instance, have been disposed to invest in religious institutions of any kind except the New Testament Church. Conformity to the 15th verse would have prevented disciples from becoming rich, especially rich enough to think of building religio-secular colleges. Thus far in the history of the disciple brotherhood, as it has existed from the early part of the 19th Century, only rich men have built, or encouraged the building of, such institutions. Poor men have sometimes become the projectors and builders of religio-secular colleges, but only because they found that they could have access to the accumulations of the rich.

What may we say of the 20th and 21st verses of this chapter? They teach that Paul was an honorable man in business, and that he had regard for his reputation as an honorable man. He was not willing to handle the contributions of the saints at Corinth without some one, or more than one, to be with

him. What may we learn from this? We may learn that the treasurer of every church should have some one to keep an account with him of all money that he receives, and, thereby, provide “for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.” The reputation of a good man is sometimes besmirched, and a church is sometimes thrown into confusion, and, perhaps, ruined, because of a failure to follow Paul's example as set forth in the 20th and 21st verses of this chapter. The careless, or slipshod method by which many churches attend to their business affairs, is a direct disgrace to the officers of those churches, and an indirect disgrace to all others connected with them. The indifference with which a house is kept, the lights are arranged and taken care of ' the Lord's table is spread, and the other business of the church is attended to, is pitiable and contemptible in many instances. Such methods in ordinary business affairs always result in ruin, and they indicate the final ruin of all who engage in them in regard to the Church of Christ.

CHAPTER IX

What is set forth in this chapter? A continuance of that which Paul “thought” “expedient”, and “necessary” for him to say to the saints at Corinth in regard to giving for the benefit of the poor saints in Judea, is here set forth.

What may we learn by considering this continuance of his writing on this subject? We may learn that Paul was not disposed to presume that the saints at Corinth would do their duty without being reminded of it, nor did he presume that a few words on that subject would be sufficient. On the contrary, he “thought it necessary to exhort” Titus and one or more of the “brethren, that they would go before” unto Corinth, and “make up beforehand” their gift “that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not of covetousness.” This indicates that he desired that they should give beforehand, and not hold to it to the utmost, as if they coveted that which they intended to give.

What may we say of the 6th and 7th verses? They set forth truth which should cause all Christians to be liberal, and cheerful, in their gifts to the Lord's cause. But should a man give so much that he will thereby impoverish his own dependent ones? No. See 1 Timothy 5:8. Yet there is much difference between taking good care of dependent ones and making them rich, even as there is much differ-

ence between comfort and extravagance in the home of Christians. We have a right to comfort, but not to extravagance; and a right to provide, but not to make rich.

What may we learn by considering the 8th verse, and onward to the end of this chapter? We may learn that Christians have a right to pray for temporal prosperity, in order that they may have more that they can give to the Lord's cause. This is indicated by Paul's prayer for the saints at Corinth in regard to "being enriched in everything to all bountifulness." What was accomplished by the contribution of the saints for the poor disciples in Judea? Those who made that contribution were benefitted, those who received it were benefitted, God was glorified by the thanksgiving of those who received it. Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be, at all times, in all places, and in all circumstances. Therefore, let the liberal contributions for the Lord's cause continue.

CHAPTER X

"What saith the scripture," as recorded in the chapter now before us? It saith that Paul "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" besought the saints at Corinth in order that he might not be "bold" when he would again be present with them, as he thought he would be "bold" toward some who had misjudged him, in regard to his walk. Then the scripture here given informs us of that which Paul said concerning his walk, his weapons, and their effect, also of his relationship to Christ, of what he might have boasted in regard to "authority," and of that which some had said of his bodily presence and of his letters. Next we are informed of Paul's idea of propriety in regard to measuring, and comparing, and stretching, and boasting, also of his hope, with reference to the Corinthian saints, in regard to their enlargement and efforts to preach the Gospel in the "regions beyond." The chapter is ended with a remark in regard to glorying, also with reference to being approved and commended.

What is indicated in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? The indication is that Paul desired to be very gentle toward those of the Corinthian church who deserved "gentleness," and that he would be "bold" toward those of them who thought that he walked "according to the flesh."

What may we find in the 5th verse of this chapter? We find Paul's statement of the results intended to be accomplished by the preaching of the Gospel. What are the "im-

aginations” that are here mentioned? Heathenism, and all other errors, especially errors in regard to religion. All errors are matters of fancy, or imagination. They are fiction, and not fact nor truth.

What is indicated by the expression, “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”? The indication is that the religion set forth in the New Testament is intended to take full possession of those who accept it. In view of this, what may we say of those who teach that mankind should “get religion”? We may say that they are right, if they mean that every one of mankind that has come to the years of understanding should get a New Testament, and study it, for by so doing all such would get the religion taught by the New Covenant Scriptures. But if they mean some mysterious operation, indicated by some peculiar feeling, as they generally mean, when they speak of “getting religion,” then we may say that Paul here sets forth the opposite idea. He implies that the New Testament religion gets the people who accept it, for it not only casts down their errors, but it brings “into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” This cannot mean less than that the entire being is brought into subjection to Christ because the religion of Christ has taken possession of the entire being. Thus the New Testament religion is intended to get the man instead of the man getting it.

What may we say of the 6th verse? It indicates that Paul's first concern was with reference to the obedience of those who could be led to obey, and then he would give attention to those who would remain in disobedience. This should be the order at all times and in all churches. Mankind are not prepared to deal with the errors of others till they have brought themselves into submission to the truth.

What of the 10th verse? Paul did not deny that which some had said concerning his personal presence and his speech. His voice may have been broken and harsh, and he may have been weak in regard to bodily strength. He did not intimate that this was not true of himself, and if it was true it was in harmony with 1 Corinthians 1:27. In view of this we may justly regard with contempt all efforts to advance the New Testament religion by means of personal appearance, or by pictures of such appearance. Those who make such efforts thereby show that they do not regard the absence from the Bible of intimation concerning the personal appearance of God's servants. Neither do they seem to regard the 16th verse of Jude which declares, of certain

vile characters, that they had “men's persons in admiration because of advantage.”

What did Paul mean by his remarks in regard to comparing, commending, stretching, and boasting, in the 12th verse, and onward to the end of the 16th? The bearing of those remarks is that he would not be numbered with those who compared themselves among themselves, and measured themselves by themselves, in regard to preaching the Gospel, nor would he boast of anything that had not been done by him, nor reach beyond his limit as a preacher, nor take advantage of other men's work. Yet he wished the saints at Corinth to know that while he was careful on these questions yet he had actually gone as far as to them in preaching the Gospel. This example of Paul is in beautiful contrast with the conduct of those preachers who refuse to do the work of an evangelist, but endeavor to “take charge” of churches that are already established, and act the part of pastors over them. All such are hirelings, and are professional preachers. They stipulate for pay, and will go from place to place according to the pay that may be offered to them. They pertain to the apostasy from the New Testament religion, and should be so regarded by all churches of Christ. They are time-servers of the most contemptible kind, and the constant influence of their work is to prevent those who are under them from studying the Bible. As a result, the labors of such preachers are such as tend to make themselves a necessity to keep up an appearance before the world, and are a sham. They commend themselves, and glory in numbers, in fine meeting houses, and in large salaries. In opposition to all such Paul says, “But he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. “

CHAPTER XI

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? The Apostle Paul here informs us of his “jealousy” and “fear” in behalf of the church at Corinth, because, he had “espoused” it to Christ, also because it was in danger of being led astray by false teachers, who would behave themselves in such a manner as to gain the confidence of that church. Then Paul informs us in regard to his estimate of himself, and indicates that he hesitated to express himself on this subject lest he might be regarded as a “fool.” This is followed by statements concerning that which he was, and

which he had endured, for the Gospel's sake, and these he ended by stating how he escaped from Damascus when the governor of the city desired to lay hold of him.

What may we learn by considering the 2nd verse of this chapter? Paul had been the first preacher of Christ at Corinth, as we may learn by reading the first part of Acts 18th chapter, and the church there was so very dear to him that he wrote as if he had made of it an offering to Christ, as a chaste virgin is espoused to a husband. Then, in the 3rd verse, he expressed his "fear" lest that church might be "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." From this we may learn that all other churches are in the same danger, and that preachers, elders, deacons, and all other disciples should be constantly careful to guard "the simplicity that is in Christ."

But is there not danger of disciples becoming technical on this question, and of being so careful that they will destroy the church by criticism? There is danger in this direction. While avoiding unscriptural liberty, on the one hand, we need to avoid unscriptural strictness on the other. While rejecting additions to the worship and work of the church we should not be so strict that we hinder true worship and effective work. For instance, while we reject the use of instrumental music in worship, and the use of man-made societies in the work of the church, we should not discard the right kind of song books from the worship, nor the teaching of children in different audiences in the meeting house. How may disciples of Christ avoid both of these extremes? They may avoid them by due study of the New Testament, and due exercise of reverence for the teaching therein found. Unscriptural liberty is adopted by reason of love of popularity, and unscriptural strictness is adopted by reason of indulgence of self-conceit. Careful study of the entire Sacred Text, especially of the New Testament, and proper reverence for all that is therein taught, will overcome love of popularity, on the one hand, and self-conceit, on the other.

But what may we learn by considering the 4th verse of this chapter? We may learn that the reason Paul was so very anxious about the brethren at Corinth was because of the insidious character of the false-hearted teachers who would come among them. They would not preach another Jesus, nor another Spirit, nor another Gospel, but they would preach the same in all these respects that Paul had preached. As a result, they would not likely be recognized as falsehearted, because they would not preach a false doctrine in any prominent particular. To whom does the word "bear"

in the last of this verse refer? The use made of that word in the 1st verse clearly indicates that it refers to Paul, and should be read "bear with me," and not "bear with him," as found in the Common Version. Paul was desirous that the brethren at Corinth should "bear" with him, and not with the false-hearted teachers. At the same time he feared they would not "bear" with him because the false-hearted teachers to whom he referred would not preach another Jesus, another Spirit, and another Gospel. On the contrary, they would act the part of "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ." See 13th, 14th and 15th verses.

Are there any preachers of that kind in modern times? Yes, all sectarian preachers, are, in some measure of that kind, from the Roman Catholics to the so-called "Salvation Army." But the most insidious of them all are the Mormons, the Adventists, and the preachers of the so-called "Christian church." Those who make up this last class, not only preach the same Jesus, and Spirit and Gospel that Paul preached, at least in form, but they often profess to be of the Church of Christ, and are flatterers. As a result they deceive many, and only those can detect their false-heartedness who have been diligent students of the Bible, and, as a result, are fortified against their contemptible flattery and false reasonings.

What may we say of the 8th verse? The translation of it, as found in the Common Version, is too severe, and does Paul injustice. He was not a robber, nor a hireling. In view of the Greek, and the connection in which this verse is found, we may safely read it thus: "I strip other churches, taking support of them, to do you service." The support that Paul received was not in "wages" as if he was a hireling, but was a gift. See Philippians 4:15-17.

What is set forth in the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th verses? Paul's determination to avoid being chargeable to the church at Corinth in order that the false teachers, who labored for it without support, might not have any advantage over him in that respect. This is specially indicated in the 12th verse.

And what may we say of the 13th, 14th and 15th verses? The Apostle Paul describes, in those verses, the Satanic disposition of the false-hearted teachers to whom he had referred. The description that he gives of them should warn Christians in all generations against all who show the nattering disposition which Satan's ministers have, generally,

manifested. Of what class of persons were the preachers to whom Paul referred composed? The 22nd verse indicates that they were chiefly, if not wholly, composed of Jews.

What may we learn by considering Paul's statements concerning the trials he had endured for the Gospel's sake? We may learn that the record given in Acts of the Apostles, concerning those trials, is very meager, and only mentions very few of them. We may learn also that Acts 9:16 was really fulfilled in Paul, likewise that Colossians 1:24 was fulfilled in him. That is to say, Christ did show him how great things he should suffer for his name's sake, and that he should fill the measure of suffering which was needed to be set forth before Christians, for their encouragement when in trials. See also I Timothy 1:16.

Was Paul anxious about "all the churches"? In the 28th verse he declared that he was. This indicates how preachers should feel concerning the churches of Christ wherever such churches are in existence, likewise that they should be careful not to say, nor do, anything, at any time, which will injure the church of Christ in any community. The Church is a blood-bought institution, and is "the pillar and ground of the truth." In other words, it is the support, or upholder, of the truth. Therefore, those who damage the Church of Christ are enemies of Christ.

In view of this what may we conclude with reference to those who take delight in reproaching and misrepresenting the Church of Christ? In the light of Matthew 25:40 they are guilty of reproaching and misrepresenting the Savior, for everything which is done unto his followers, even "the least" of them, he regards as done unto himself. 1 Corinthians 8:12 has a bearing in the same direction. Therefore, all who desire to be saved should be careful not to injure the Church of Christ at any time, in any place, or in any circumstances.

CHAPTER XII

What is here set forth for Bible readers to learn? In the beginning of this chapter Paul stated that it was not expedient for him to glory, and that he would come to visions and revelations. Then he referred to a man who had visions and revelations, and he said that he would glory of such a man. This is followed by mention of a severe trial through which he passed by the Lord's help. Then Paul wrote of his apostleship, and of his devotion to the saints at Corinth, also

of the disposition he felt toward those who had sinned in the church there.

To whom did Paul refer in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of this chapter? He must have referred to himself as an apostle for he did not know of anyone else hearing “unspeakable words.” But how could he say that he would glory “of such an one,” but of himself he would “not glory,” if he was referring to himself? The answer to this question is, that as an apostle he heard “unspeakable words,” and he would glory of himself as an apostle, but not of himself as a man.

What does the word “unspeakable” mean in this connection? The Greek word here translated by the word “unspeakable” means “not spoken; what ought not to be spoken; secret; which cannot be spoken or uttered.” In view of these shades of meaning we may conclude that Paul heard some of the secret things of God. See Deuteronomy 29:29; Revelation 10:4.

What else may we learn by considering the first part of this chapter? We may learn that “the third heaven” and “paradise” are the same region, or domain. The first heaven, or space above the earth, is the region in which the fowls fly. See Genesis 1:20. What the second heaven is we are not informed, but it may be “tartaros,” or the place in “hades” where the wicked dead will be kept between death and the resurrection, for, in Luke 16:19-31, we learn that it was from “paradise” on the other side of a certain gulf. The Greek word “hades,” often translated, in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, by the word “hell,” means the entire domain of departed spirits without regard to the good or bad. Then the word “tartaros” is found in 2 Peter 2:4, and there is mistranslated by the word “bell” in the Common Version. Finally, in Luke 23:43, we find the word “paradise” to represent the place in “hades” to which the Savior and the pardoned thief went, on the day that they died. In view of all this, it may be that the second domain of the upper region is “tartaros” where the wicked spirits will be kept between death and the final judgment. May we learn anything else by considering the first part of this chapter? Yes. We may learn that a man may have a conscious existence out of the body. This cannot be denied without denying that Paul is a reliable witness, for he wrote of the possibility of a man “out of the body” having “visions and revelations,” and hearing “words.” But Paul could not have written thus if man consists only

of a well mixed body, or if he has not a spirit that can be conscious and intelligent when out of the body. Therefore the doctrine of the materialists is in direct opposition to that which Paul here declares on this subject.

But what did Paul mean by “a thorn in the flesh,” as mentioned in the 7th verse of this chapter? He explains that he referred to a being whom he designated “the messenger of Satan,” and this should be satisfactory to all Bible readers. In other words, the Lord suffered some evil character, like “Alexander the coppersmith” (2 Timothy 4:14, 15), to come against him, and annoy him, in his work. This is indicated by the expression, “the messenger of Satan to buffet me.” The Greek word here translated “buffet” means “to beat with the fist; maltreat; treat with contumely and ignomy.” In the light of this evidence we should not speculate concerning the figurative expression “thorn in the flesh” as here found.

And what may we learn by considering the 7th, 8th and 9th verses together? We may learn that the Lord knew Paul's danger, and humbled him so that he might be kept from sin. He did not wait till Paul had sinned, but brought upon him an annoyance, or affliction, which would keep him from sinning. In view of this all Christians should receive with meekness all trials which they may be required to endure, and should never murmur nor complain because the Lord suffers evil to come upon them. Neither should Christians say that they cannot see any justice in the Lord suffering them to be afflicted when they have not done anything specially wrong. The Lord did not wait till Paul had done wrong before he suffered “the messenger of Satan to buffet” him, but he allowed that messenger to come against him in order to prevent him from doing wrong. A certain Christian was ambitious to be rich in the things of this world. But he had to pay a security debt which was all that he could do for ten years, or more than that period, and, in the meantime, he lost his ambition to be rich. Then he said that it was good for him that he had to pay that debt. Thus it is that “whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.” (Hebrews 12:6.) Paul was desirous to be delivered from “the messenger of Satan,” and prayed to that end. But the Lord knew best, and gave him grace to endure that “messenger.” As a result Paul did not sin by becoming “exalted above measure,” and was satisfied with the Lord's arrangement. This is a lesson which all Christians should learn, and, as a result, should never complain against God.

Did Paul mean that he had really committed a “wrong” in not being “burdensome” to the church at Corinth? No. The first shade of meaning of the Greek word here translated “wrong” is “injustice,” and that shade of meaning sets forth the true idea. Justice required that Paul should have been supported by that church while he labored in its midst, but, to be on an equality, in regard to support, with certain “deceitful workers,” and thereby prevent them from having an advantage over him in this respect, he did not require support of them. He was justified in so doing in view of the end which he wished to accomplish, yet, in one sense, it was injustice to them because it did not give them an opportunity to do that which I Corinthians 9:14 sets forth. In this sense, only, was it injustice to the Corinthians for Paul to support himself.

Does the last part of the 14th verse of this chapter justify parents in trying to make their children rich in the things of this world? No. It only justifies them in laying up sufficient to take care of them until they are able to take care of themselves. Some parents, who were Christians, have become backsliders from the Church by their desire to enrich their children. Besides, their riches when bestowed on their children have cursed them by leading them into worldliness which they would not otherwise have thought of.

What may we say of the 15th verse of this chapter? It indicates that Paul's devotion to the welfare of the church at Corinth was such that he was above the sting of ingratitude. This implies that his human nature was entirely in subjection to his desire for the best interests of that church. All professed Christians, who become conceited with reference to their own goodness, should read and study every day the declaration now under consideration.

Did Paul mean that he had caught the Corinthians with guile? No. The connection here indicates that the last of the 16th verse should be regarded as a question thus: “Nevertheless, being crafty caught I you with guile?” This is in harmony with the connection in which this verse is found, and avoids the need of explanation.

What may we say of Paul's fear, as expressed in the 20th and 21st verses? Though the church had repented of some, perhaps all, of the wrongs that he reproved in his first letter, yet he was not satisfied. He feared that certain persons in that church might be wrong in other respects.

May the word “debates” be properly used against Chris-

tians who have discussions with those who ate professed Christians, but are heretics? No. This verse can only be used correctly against those who are really Christians debating with each other, and especially when they debate about questions that are not of practical importance.

And what may we conclude from Paul's fear, as here expressed? He did not believe in the doctrine, "Never meet trouble half-way," but believed in meeting it the full distance. He knew the probabilities, and even the possibilities, to which the saints at Corinth were subject, and proposed to forewarn those whom he addressed. Here is a good example for all Christians. We would better be too anxious, than too careless, in regard to the spiritual welfare of others, as well as of ourselves.

CHAPTER XIII

What may we learn by considering the last chapter of the second letter of Paul to the church at Corinth? We may learn that he had been at Corinth twice before, and that when he would go to that church again he would call for testimony against the wrong doers who were there, and that he would not spare them. Then we learn that as those wrong doers sought a proof of Christ in him that he would give it by showing his "power" as an apostle. Next we learn that he commanded them to examine and test themselves, and stated that if they were not "reprobates" then Christ was in them. This is followed by the declaration that he was not a reprobate. The supremacy of the truth is next declared, his rejoicing in the strength of the Corinthians is also declared, and then his desire for their "perfection." Next we are informed that Paul wrote to the Corinthians, as he did, in order to avoid the necessity of using sharpness when he would go among them. The chapter is ended with an exhortation, followed by a benediction.

What may we learn by studying the 1st verse of this chapter? We may learn that Paul intended to observe the divine doctrine in regard to testimony. See Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15. This indicates the danger of jurors, or anyone else, deciding a case, either in regard to civil or criminal or religious affairs, on merely circumstantial evidence, or the testimony of one witness.

What does the word "reprobates" mean as mentioned in the 5th, 6th and 7th verses? The Greek word here translated by the word "reprobates" means "unable to stand

test, rejected, refuse, worthless.” The primary idea, therefore, is “without proof,” for when anything is without proof it is not able to stand test. May persons be “reprobates” in several respects? They may. One man may be without proof, or unable to stand the test, in doctrine, another in name, another in private character, another may be reprobate in all these respects. In view of all this what may be said of all religious denominations not mentioned in the Bible? They are all reprobate in name, and, when compared with the Sacred Text in doctrine, they are all, more, or less, defective, or without proof. Therefore all such denominations are “reprobates.” And, what is true of all disciples who have obeyed the right doctrine, and wear the right name, and make the right profession, but do not deny themselves ungodliness and worldly lusts, and, as a result, do not live in the holy, righteous, and godly, manner that the New Testament requires? All such are “reprobates.” Moreover, they are less excusable than any of the sects of so-called Christendom. Sectarians, as a rule, do not know any better than to be sectarians, but disciples do know better. Therefore, they are under greater condemnation, if they do not live aright, than are the sectarians, and it will be “more tolerable” for the sectarians in the last day than for such disciples. See Matthew 11:20-24.

Does the 8th verse mean that we cannot do anything in any sense, or degree, against the truth? No. In 2 Timothy 4:14 Paul taught differently. But it must mean that we cannot make a success in opposing the truth.

What of Paul's deep devotion to the welfare of the saints at Corinth as here indicated? The welfare of those saints was the burden of his spirit.

What is the present application of the 12th verse? It is like the application of the command, “Honor the king.” See 1 Peter 2:17. Wherever the political custom has established a king as a ruler, the Christian should honor him; and wherever the social custom has established a kiss, as a method of greeting, the Christian should let it be “a holy kiss.” But the Christian should not try to introduce a king as a ruler where he has not been established, nor introduce a kiss as a method of greeting where it has not been established. The command in each instance is intended to regulate Christians in regard to a custom, and not to create a custom.

In conclusion what may we say of the letter through which

we have just passed? It is a letter that seems to have been begun for the purpose of comforting the saints at Corinth, and was made a document of instruction and warning in the continuance. It is a model for all those who wish to instruct, and warn, for it begins with gentleness. In this letter Paul reveals much of himself as a man as well as of himself as an apostle. It should be carefully studied by all who wish to be saved.

GALATIANS

CHAPTER I

What are the outlines of the letter we now begin to consider? Paul's surprise that the Galatian Christians had turned from the Gospel, to a perversion of it, and the beginning of his defense of his calling to the apostleship, make up the 1st chapter. A continuance of that defense, and his introduction of the doctrine of justification by faith make up the 2nd chapter. In the 3rd and 4th chapters we find a discussion of justification by faith, in which is set forth the difference between the Jewish law and the gospel of Christ. In the 5th chapter Paul begins with an exhortation to keep clear of the Jewish law, then he instructs, and warns, and exhorts. The last chapter consists chiefly of exhortations, and instructions.

And what may we say of the occasion of this letter? Paul seems to have written it because the Christians in Galatia had begun to turn from the Gospel, as he had preached it, to a perversion of it which certain others had made.

Does Paul contradict himself in the 6th and 7th verses? He does not. The 7th verse indicates that the reason that the doctrine he first called "another gospel" he afterwards said was "not another," was because it was not altogether another gospel, but was only a perversion of "the gospel of Christ." In the light of the 8th and 9th verses of this chapter, also chapter 5:1-4, we learn that a perversion of the gospel of Christ cannot save those who accept it, and, therefore, it is not the gospel of Christ.

What is meant by the expression "some that trouble you," as recorded in the 7th verse? In Acts 15:1, 24 we are informed concerning those who troubled the churches among the Gentiles with Jewish circumcision, and, in chapter 5:1-4, we learn that circumcision was the subject to which Paul referred when he wrote of "some that trouble you." This being true, we learn that the addition of Jewish circumcision to the gospel of Christ was a perversion of the gospel of Christ. This implies that the addition of any

thing else to that Gospel is a perversion of it, and such perversion as will prevent it from saving those who accept it.

What may we say of the 8th and 9th verses of this chapter? They indicate the fulness of the certainty which Paul felt in regard to the Gospel that he had preached to the Galatians. He was so certain that he had preached it aright, and that they had received it aright, that he was disposed to confront any man, or even an angel from heaven, who would preach another Gospel to them. He felt so confident, in regard to the doctrine he had preached to the Galatians ' and their acceptance of it, that he invoked a curse on either man or angel who would preach to them another Gospel than that which he had preached to them. In thus writing Paul expressed himself in the fulness of certainty, and the fact that he invoked a curse on either man or angel who would preach any Gospel, except that which he had preached to the Galatians, should cause all preachers to be careful not to pervert that Gospel. Besides, it should cause all who listen to preachers to watch them with care, and measure them by the Gospel which Paul preached, for a perversion of that Gospel will not save them.

What of the 10th verse? Its implications bear heavily against all preachers who, in order to please men, pervert the Gospel by adding humanisms to it, and then try to persuade God to regard with favor the perversions they have made. Paul was a Gospel preacher, but all who pervert the Gospel to please men are Gospel-adjusters. Paul preached the gospel of Christ, and then endeavored to persuade mankind to adjust themselves to it, but many preachers try to adjust the Gospel to mankind ' and then try to persuade God to be pleased with their efforts in that direction. But Paul declared that if he yet pleased men he should not be a servant of Christ, for he well knew that human nature was directly opposed to the gospel of Christ. The same is still true, and will be true till the end of time. Therefore, those preachers who are most popular with the unconverted and half-converted part of mankind are not servants of Christ.

What may we learn by considering the 11th and 12th verses? We may learn that Paul wished to assure his brethren in Galatia that he had not received from men the Gospel that he had preached to them, but that he had received it "by the revelation of Jesus Christ." In the assurance that he here gave, the apostle declared his apostleship, and indicated that he had received his commission, as an apostle,

directly from Christ. A declaration to this effect was important, in view of the reproof, and correction, he intended to administer to the Galatian brethren.

What is indicated in the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th verses of this chapter? The indication here is that Paul wished to assure his brethren in Galatia of that which they had heard concerning his former life in the Jews' religion, and of his persecution of the Church of God. Having given them that assurance he then made a statement of his conversion to Christ. In connection with this statement he declared that when it pleased God to reveal his Son in him he "conferred not with flesh and blood." What may we learn by considering Paul's declaration that he "conferred not with flesh and blood"? We may learn that he did not inquire whether, if he became a Christian, his life would be long or short, pleasant or unpleasant, nor whether he would have few friends or many. The record given of his life indicates that he did not confer with anything which will fail to rise in the resurrection of the just. On the contrary, he gave himself up, in spirit, in soul, and in body, to do the Lord's will. All others should do the same.

What did Paul offer to the Galatians in the 17th verse and onward to the end of this chapter? He offered information concerning himself in relation to certain apostles at Jerusalem, and the churches of Christ in Judea. This information explains, in some measure, what he meant in the 11th and 12th verses. Paul wished the brethren in Galatia to understand that he received his commission directly from the Savior, and was of equal rank with the apostles at Jerusalem. They needed to understand this in order to appreciate, at full value, all that he would offer to them in this epistle.

CHAPTER II

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? The first part of it is a continuance of Paul's explanation of his relations to certain apostles at Jerusalem, in connection with which we find mention of certain men named Barnabas and Titus, and reference to "false brethren" whose purpose was to bring him "into bondage." This is followed by a statement of Paul's disposition with reference to the mentioned "false brethren," also a statement of his relations to those who were apostles before him, and especially his opposition to the Apostle Peter when he came to Antioch. That which he wrote concerning Peter introduced the difference be-

tween Jews and Gentiles, and served Paul as an introduction to his discussion of the difference between the Jewish law and the gospel of Christ.

Why did Paul mention that Titus was not “compelled to be circumcised”? In Acts 16:1-3 we learn that Paul did circumcise Timothy, who was of Jewish parentage on his mother's side, and who, therefore, had a right to fleshly circumcision. But Titus was a Greek, without any Jewish blood in his veins, and Paul here mentioned that he was not “compelled to be circumcised,” in order to indicate that the apostles at Jerusalem did not regard Jewish circumcision as necessary for Gentile Christians. He mentioned this in order to prepare the Gentiles to whom he wrote for that which he wished to offer to them on the question of circumcision.

To whom did Paul refer when he mentioned “false brethren” in the 4th verse? The connection indicates that he referred to those who are mentioned in Acts 15:1. The word “bondage” as used in the last of this verse, and as used in the first of chapter 5:1, also indicates the same. But if the advocacy of Jewish circumcision, as something necessary to salvation, was an evidence, in certain men, of being “false brethren,” what may we say of those who advocate the use of instrumental music as necessary to salvation? They, likewise, give evidence of being “false brethren.” But suppose they say that they do not regard the use of such instruments as “necessary to salvation”

what then? We should ask them if they do not regard the hearing of the Gospel as necessary to salvation. When they give an affirmative answer we should then inform them that the chief argument, thus far used, in behalf of instrumental music in connection with the song service is that it “helps to draw an audience.” And, as it is necessary for persons to hear the Gospel in order to be converted the conclusion is unavoidable that everything which is needed in order to “draw” persons to hear the Gospel is necessary to salvation. Therefore, those who advocate the use of instrumental music in their song service regard it as “necessary” to the sinner's salvation, in the first premise, or is necessary as a primary consideration, namely, to induce sinners to hear the Gospel. Jesus said of himself “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” See John 12:32. But the advocates of instrumental music to draw sinners to hear Christ preached seem to think that the doctrine of the cross is defective as a drawing power.,

And so it is, as exemplified in the lives of those who advocate such music for such purpose. The doctrine of the cross is so strikingly absent from their jocular, worldly, mercenary, lives that they need some humanly devised drawing power.

What may we say of Paul's disposition toward the "false brethren" to whom he referred? It was right, and showed that he was not a religious coward. If he had yielded to them the churches among the Gentiles would soon have been overrun with them, and Jewish circumcision would have been everywhere regarded as a condition of salvation. As a result, the gospel of Christ would have been regarded as a defective arrangement, which needed to be supplemented, or spliced out, by a Jewish ordinance which was not intended for Gentile sinners. But as he opposed them, and did not give place by subjection to them, even for an hour, they were, in a great measure, defeated in their purposes to bring the Gentile churches into "bondage" to the Jewish law.

What would have been the result, if disciples of Christ, in the 19th Century, who were satisfied with the divine arrangement for converting sinners and perfecting believers, had followed Paul's example, as mentioned in the 5th verse of this chapter? The Christian church defection would have been a small affair compared with the proportions it has shown. But it began with that insidious something known as a "religious college," in the year 1840, then in 1849 it was augmented by another insidious something known as a "missionary society." Between 1850 and 1860 another insidious something, known as "the pastorate," was established in several city churches. Between 1860 and 1870 that other insidious something known as "instrumental music," began to be introduced. Between 1870 and 1880 the "mite society," and "festivals" to raise money, began to be adopted. These were followed by many other devices for the same purpose, and "the gospel of money," as one of the mentioned defection designated it, soon became the gospel which many of them preached, rather than "the gospel of Christ." Or, as another of their number has confessed, they "worshiped the God of money," or "worshiped gold, rather than the God of heaven." Thus, insidiously, were multitudes of disciples turned from "the simplicity that is in Christ" by "false brethren," and they succeeded extensively because the elders of the churches did not follow Paul's example as mentioned in the 5th verse of this chapter. But the elders were, quite generally, disarmed

and overshadowed by the religious college, the missionary society, and the college preacher, as a pastor, before the use of instrumental music began to be introduced. As a result, a majority of the city churches were captured by the innovating spirit, and many others were damaged. As a further result, the plea for oneness in Christ, made by disciples of Christ in the first part of the 19th Century, was discarded, and the name of Christ was disgraced.

Of what are Bible readers informed in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th verses of this chapter? We are informed that those who were prominent in the church at Jerusalem did not add anything to Paul, but, on the contrary, that “when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed” to him they gave to him and Barnabas “the right hands of fellowship.” What is meant by the expressions “gospel of the uncircumcision” and “gospel of the circumcision,” as recorded in the 7th verse? Those expressions cannot mean more nor less than that Paul was commissioned by Christ to preach to the Gentiles, while Peter was commissioned by him to preach the Gospel to the Jews. They both preached the same Gospel. This is evident by the preaching that Peter did at the house of Cornelius, as recorded in Acts 10th chapter. The Gospel, in its facts, consisted of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and in its commands required faith, repentance, confession of faith and baptism. At the house of Cornelius the Holy Spirit came, in miraculous power upon the Gentiles who there heard the preaching, but the evidence of that power was the gift of tongues, and in 1 Corinthians 14:22 we learn that tongues were for “a sign” to unbelievers. Besides, in the 2nd verse of this chapter Paul declared that he “communicated” unto those at Jerusalem “that gospel” which he preached “among the Gentiles.” It was the same Gospel in every instance. The Savior commanded that it should be preached to “all nations” and to every creature. Therefore, those who say that Peter preached one gospel to the Jews and another to the Gentiles, likewise those who speak of “Matthew's gospel,” “Mark's gospel Luke's gospel,” and “John's gospel,” certainly do not “speak as the oracles of God” on the subject. On the contrary, they differ from those oracles in speech, and convey wrong ideas by that which they say with reference to this question.

What may we say of the “right hands of fellowship” that were given to Paul and Barnabas, as mentioned in the 9th verse? The “right hands of fellowship” were given to them with reference to work, and on the basis of equal rank. That

rank is indicated by the comparison between Paul and Peter as set forth in the 7th and 8th verses, also by the expression “perceived the grace. that was given unto me,” as set forth in the 9th verse. In view of all this we learn that “the right hands of fellowship,” extended on the basis of equal rank, and in acknowledgment of that rank, was exemplified in the New Testament Church. Because it was therein exemplified, and was not miraculous, nor of anything else that was destined to end with miracles, it is right to practice it in the New Testament Church now, and will be till the end of time. If we cannot imitate the Apostles in regard to “the right hands of fellowship,” we cannot imitate them in any other particulars, and the command in 2 Timothy 2:2 cannot be obeyed. If some one says that “the right hands of fellowship” were given to Paul and Barnabas when they were about to leave Jerusalem, we should answer that the Scripture does not so declare. But even if it did, yet we would have the right to extend “the right hands of fellowship” when those of equal rank wish to unite with us in the work of the church. And, let it be understood at all times that the giving of the hands of fellowship here mentioned was with reference to work, and not worship. This is indicated by the expression “go unto the heathen,” as found in the 9th verse. Moreover, the giving of “the right hands of fellowship” was not intended to create fellowship, but only to acknowledge, or recognize ' the fellowship that obedience to the Gospel had already created, or brought into existence. In certain churches now in existence one of the elders, or some one designated by the elders, extends the hand in behalf of the congregation. In any place where the hand is extended after that manner, and the congregation is satisfied, certainly there should not be any objection by any one else.

In view of all this, what may we say of those who denounce, as an innovation, the giving of “the right hands of fellowship” in a formal manner when recognizing persons as members of a local congregation? They are disturbers of churches, to the extent that they bring, either publicly or privately, their denouncements on this subject before the churches. Besides, if there is not a formal acceptance of members into the local church, there cannot be a formal rejection of them. If a person is baptized into the local church, then if such a person afterward becomes an apostate, or even a reprobate, certainly the local church membership is severed, and all that is said on the question of withdrawing fellowship from wrong doers is in vain. As a result, the dis-

ciplinary instructions found in 1 Corinthians 5:3-13, and 2 Thessalonians 3:6, should never have been written.

But suppose that the denouncer of formally extending “the right hands of fellowship,” in receiving persons into the local congregation of disciples, says that we cannot find an instance in which a New Testament church thus received persons, what should we then say? We should answer that we have found an instance, in the chapter before us, in which certain men “who seemed to be pillars” in the church in Jerusalem gave to certain other prominent men “the right hands of fellowship” in regard to the Lord's work. This ought to settle the question, and will settle it with all who love the peace of the church, and good order in the church, more than they do their own technical notions. There are some who denounce the giving of “the right hands of fellowship” in a formal manner in receiving persons into the local congregation as “an innovation,” but advocate a religio-secular college to be supported by the church, and a Sunday-school with a treasury and literature of its own. Others reject the college and the Sunday-school, but think that to call a preacher to hold a protracted meeting, and to have him to extend a formal invitation to sinners, and sing an invitation hymn, and ask the sinner for a formal confession of his faith, as practices, are all right, though not one of them is mentioned in the New Testament!

But why cannot those who do not believe in extending “the right hands of fellowship,” in a formal manner, refrain from it and let those who believe in it enjoy the privilege of practicing it, without disturbing them? They can do so, and will do so, in every instance in which they are possessed of the spirit of forbearance. If they regard themselves as strong in the faith they should remember Romans 15:1, and bear with their brethren who are weak enough to believe that they may extend “the right hands of fellowship,” in a formal manner, to those whom they receive into the local congregation.

What may we learn by considering the 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th verses of this chapter? We may learn that, as an evidence that he was the equal of Peter, Paul mentioned the fact that he confronted Peter, and reprovved him, at Antioch, when “he was to be blamed.” Peter, in order to avoid a conflict with Jewish prejudices, acted as if he would not eat with Gentiles. In thus acting he manifested hypocrisy, and Paul publicly reprovved him for it, and made mention of the fact that he reprovved him as an evidence, of his own rank as an apostle.

What may we say of the conduct of the Apostle Peter on that occasion? It shows that when he was not under direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit he was liable to show his impulsiveness and do wrong.

May a preacher of Christ follow the example that Paul set in reproving Peter? Yes, with the restriction mentioned in 1 Timothy 5:1. That is to say, a young preacher should not rebuke an elder. But, with this exception, all error should be reproofed, and those guilty of advancing it should be rebuked. The mistake that Peter made at Antioch, when he acted the part of a hypocrite about eating with the Gentiles there, was liable to be far-reaching in its results, and it needed to be promptly and publicly corrected. The same is true of many other errors. Yet, in most instances, all that should be said, when an error is advanced by a speaker, is to ask those present to consider the error, or supposed error, and thereby prevent it from being accepted. Hasty rebuke is not safe. Besides, the one who would offer the rebuke may sometimes be wrong, and, for that reason, should not be hasty. Everything resembling a jangle, or even a controversy, in the public assembly, should be avoided, whenever possible, especially when the church meets for worship. Then, above all other occasions, the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" should prevail.

What is indicated in the 15th and 16th verses? The subject of Paul's discussion in the 3rd and 4th chapters of this letter we find here indicated. Paul here introduces the declaration that "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ," also the declaration that he and others had "believed in Jesus Christ that" they "might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law," and, finally, the declaration that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." By these three declarations, as found in this verse, Paul introduced his discussion, in this letter, of the controversy that then existed between the Jews and Gentiles.

When was this controversy begun? Luke informs us in the 15th chapter of Acts. When was it ended? It has not ended yet, but the sectarian denominations have, from their beginning, been Judaizing teachers. Those denominations have not declared to the people "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1, but they have ignored the declaration, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes." (Romans 10:4.) As a result, they have gone to the Jewish law, or to some other part of the Old Testament, for

scripture to justify several of their practices that are not authorized by the Gospel.

What is referred to by the word “sinners” in the 17th verse? The 18th verse indicates what is referred to, and shows that Paul's reasoning is this: He had declared that “by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified,” and by that declaration he had destroyed the hope of justification by the law. But if he would now build that hope again, by admitting that it is possible to be justified, in any measure, by the law, he would make himself a “transgressor,” and all others who would try to build such hopes in regard to the law would be “sinners.”

What is indicated in the 19th verse? Just that is indicated which Paul declared in Romans 3:31. The law foreshadowed the Gospel. See Hebrews 10:1. When the Gospel was established, then the law, as a shadow, was fulfilled, Thus it was that “through the law,” in its fulfillment, Paul became “dead to the law” that he “might live unto God.” See Romans 7:4.

What did Paul refer to when he said he was “crucified with Christ,” as recorded in the 20th verse? In chapters 5:24 and 6:14 we are informed that he referred to his separation from the world by reason of his devotion to Christ.

What is meant by the expression “the faith,” as found in this verse, also in the 16th verse? It means the same that it does in the 3rd verse of Jude's letter, and in that verse the expression, “the faith,” refers to the Gospel as a doctrine which is to be received by mankind in order to be saved. There is a difference between “faith” as belief, and “the faith” as a doctrine. “Faith,” in the sense of belief, is produced by testimony. See John 20:30, 31; Acts 14:1; Romans 10:17. But “the faith,” in the sense of the Gospel, or the New Covenant doctrine, is the system of teaching which the Holy Spirit has authorized to be observed in the Gospel Age. The Common Version of the Sacred Text does not always indicate the difference between “faith” as belief, and “the faith” as a doctrine. For instance, in Acts 15:9 the Common Version implies that “faith,” as therein mentioned, means “faith,” in the sense of belief, but in the Greek text the definite article before the word “faith” shows that Peter referred to the Gospel when he spoke of God purifying the hearts of the Gentiles. That purification was to be accomplished by their faith which was produced by “the faith,” or by the effect which the Gospel accomplished in them.

In what sense is it true that “if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain,” as mentioned in the last verse of this chapter? In chapter 3:21 Paul refers to this same subject. In both of these passages the idea is that, if mankind could have been saved by the law, then the death of Christ would not have been necessary. This should have been a strong argument with those Jews who believed on Christ, and yet held to the law as necessary for righteousness. It should have been sufficient to convince them that they should not hold to the law as a means of righteousness. In Hebrews 10th chapter we find that Paul taught the same doctrine which he here indicated, namely, that “righteousness” and “life” in the Gospel Age come through Christ, and not through the Jewish law.

CHAPTER III

“What saith the scripture,” as recorded in this chapter? In this chapter of scripture Paul rebuked the brethren in Galatia for not obeying the truth, and began his discussion of their disobedience by asking a series of questions. This he followed by referring to the faith which Abraham had, and God's estimate of his faith. Next we find the declaration that the Gospel was preached to Abraham, and the blessedness of those who are of faith. In contrast with this he declared the condition of those who are “under the law.” Then he restated his proposition that “no man is justified by the law,” and made a quotation from the Old Testament to prove it. This he followed by the declaration that, “The law is not of faith,” and made a quotation from the Old Testament as proof. Then he declared that Christ has redeemed us from the law, and stated how he wrought this redemption, and what end was to be thereby accomplished. Next he introduced a man-made covenant to illustrate God's covenant. Finally, he stated why the law was added, and what it was intended to accomplish, also that when the end had been accomplished, then mankind were not any longer under it, but were under faith. The chapter is ended with a statement of the advantages of being under faith.

In what sense had Christ been “set forth crucified” among the Galatians? Only as he is “set forth” in the doctrine of the cross, in the Lord's supper, and in the life of Paul, had he been thus “set forth” among them. Christ was actually crucified in, or near, Jerusalem, of Palestine, and not in Galatia, which was a province in Asia Minor. Yet

he had been so clearly set before the brethren in Galatia, as the one who was crucified for them, that for them to disobey him, or receive his Gospel at a discount, and turn to the Jewish law, seemed to Paul as if some one had "bewitched" them.

What may we learn by considering the questions recorded in the 2nd and 3rd verses? We may learn that, as the Galatians did not receive "the Spirit," called "the Spirit of adoption" in Romans 8:15, "by the works of the law," but by the hearing of "faith," and as they had "begun in the Spirit," why should they conclude that they could be "made perfect by the flesh"?

Have these questions any application to the present condition of that part of the religious world known as "Christendom"? They have a clear application to the existing condition of the so-called "Christendom." All the sectarian denominations that profess to believe in Christ begin with the Spirit, and try to be made perfect by the flesh. In other words, the sectarian begins with the teaching of the Holy Spirit, as set forth in the New Testament, and then, "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" (Colossians 2:18), he adopts humanisms of various kinds, or borrows from the Jewish law, which had fleshly ordinances, and thereby tries to become "perfect by the flesh."

What is implied in the 4th and 5th verses of this chapter? The first implication is that the Galatians had suffered much, but had suffered "in vain" if they could be "made perfect by the flesh," or by the fleshly ordinance of circumcision. The next implication is that Paul, as the one through whom spiritual gifts had been bestowed upon them, and miracles had been wrought among them, had not accomplished all this in their behalf "by the works of the law," but "by the hearing of faith." The conclusion that he desired them to reach was that, therefore, they should not hold to "the works of the law," but should cling to the Gospel.

What may we learn by considering the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th verses? We may learn that Paul, in his argument in behalf of faith, in contrast with the Jewish law, mentioned Abraham, and declared that he was accounted as righteous before God by reason of "faith," also that "they who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," and "are blessed with faithful Abraham." We may learn, likewise, that Paul's application of the promise to Abraham, in Genesis 12:3, that in him all nations of the earth should be blessed, referred to the preaching of the Gospel to the Gen-

tiles. This revelation to the Christians in Galatia should have been satisfactory to them, and, in itself should have been sufficient to abolish every vestige of their disposition to listen with favor to those Judaizing teachers who were endeavoring to lead them to adopt a certain part of the Jewish law. Moreover, it should cause all professed Christians, who now live, to be satisfied with the Gospel without the adoption of instrumental music in worship, or any other item of Judaism. "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness," and "they who are of faith are the children of Abraham," and "are blessed with faithful Abraham." This should convince all that Christians should not adopt instrumental music, nor anything else that was peculiar to Judaism.

But, perhaps, some one will here conclude that Abraham was justified by "faith alone," or by "faith only," and will teach that sinners may now be justified by faith without obedience, of any kind, except in the mental act of believing. If so, what should we then say? We should say that Paul was not reasoning in favor of faith against all obedience but simply in favor of faith and against obedience to the Jewish law, or anything else that was not required of Gentiles. Besides, if we examine the history of Abraham, as given in Genesis 12th chapter, and onward to the end of his life, we may learn that he did everything that God ever commanded him to do. Then, by reading Romans 4:10, 11 we learn that Abraham's faith was "accounted to him for righteousness" even before he had received the ordinance, or "covenant," of circumcision. Still it was not without obedience, for in all things he did that which God enjoined upon him. Therefore, while Abraham was "justified by faith without the deeds" of the Jewish law, yet he was not justified by faith without obedience to God. This is the doctrine which Paul endeavored to impress on the Christians in Galatia, and it is the doctrine which all others should learn.

What is set forth in the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? Paul here set forth that those who "are of the works of the law are under the curse," because there was a "curse" pronounced on every one who did not continue "in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." See Deuteronomy 27:26. And, as the works of the law were so numerous that some of them were constantly liable to be violated, they were spoken of by the Apostle Peter as a yoke which was oppressive. See Acts 15:10. In the 13th verse Paul set forth, also, that "Christ

hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made, a curse for us," by being hanged upon a tree. This revelation to the Gentile Christians in Galatia should have been sufficient, without any other to prevent them from turning to any part of Judaism. It should likewise be sufficient to prevent Gentile Christians, who now live, from going after instrumental music in worship, or after any other vestige of Judaism. Finally, in the 11th verse Paul quoted from an Old Testament prophet, who taught in course of the Jewish Age the very doctrine he was endeavoring to impress, namely, "The just shall live by faith. " See Habakkuk 2:4. This should have made all other arguments on this subject unnecessary for the Christians in Galatia, and should prevent all others from going to the Jewish Age in order to find something to please the Lord.

And what may we say of the 14th verse? It states that which was divinely intended to be the result of Christ having been made a curse for us by dying on the cross in our behalf. What promise of the Spirit is referred to in this verse? In chapter 4:6 we are informed, also in Romans 8:15.

What is set forth in the 15th verse, and onward to the end of the 17th? Mention is made of the stability and sacredness of "a man's covenant," to illustrate the stability and sacredness of the Lord's covenant with Abraham. Then he declared that the promise to Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 12:3, referred to Christ. That promise is, in the 17th verse, designated "the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ," and then the declaration is made that "the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after," could not annul, nor make of "none effect."

To what period, or date, is reference made by the word "after," as recorded in this 17th verse? It must have referred to the time that the promise to Abraham was "confirmed," for the confirmation of that promise is here mentioned, and not the giving, nor making, of that promise. But when was that promise "confirmed before of God in Christ"? In Genesis 49:10 we find the answer. To Judah, a descendant of Abraham, the promise, recorded in Genesis 12:3, was confirmed, for the assurance was given to him that the scepter, or ruling power, should not depart from him, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until someone should come who would deserve to be called "Shiloh," which means "rest." Then in Matthew 11:28-30 we learn concerning that one who deserved such a name. This conclusion is in harmony with Exodus 12:40, for not until

Jacob, who was called “Israel,” was dead were his descendants generally designated “the children of Israel.” Therefore, we may safely conclude that the confirmation, to which Paul here refers, of “the promise to Abraham,” was made when Jacob, while dying, pronounced his blessing upon Judah. This conclusion becomes more evident when we consider that, in Genesis 49:10, we find the first definite mention that is made of a person, in the promise to Abraham which is here referred to. In Genesis 12:3—the declaration of that promise is general and so is its repetition in Genesis 18:18; 22:18; 26:4. But in Genesis 49:10 the promise is definite, and refers to a person named “Shiloh,” which name means “rest.”

What may we say of the 18th and 19th verses? In the 18th verse “the law” and “the promise” are contrasted, in a manner which indicates that if “the inheritance,” that he should be “heir of the world” (Romans 4:13), was of “the law” it could not be “by promise.” This means that if the Galatian brethren would accept the idea that the spiritual blessings that had come to them were of “the law” they would need to deny that they came “by promise.” Then in the 19th verse Paul declared that the law “was added because of transgression,” or added to reveal transgression. See Romans 3:20. In other words, it was given to reveal to man his sinful condition until the time would come for the promise to be fulfilled in Christ, and this was done in order that those to whom Christ would be preached would be willing to accept him.

What is meant by the expression, “ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator”? In Acts 7:38, 53 we are informed that God used an angel to speak to Moses on Mount Sinai, when he gave to him the law, even as he did when he spake to him in the midst of a burning bush. See Exodus 3:2. What is the meaning of the word “mediator”? It means a middle man, or mutual friend between two persons at variance. See Deuteronomy 5:5.

What may we say of the 21st verse, and onward to the end of the 25th? The 21st declares that the law is not “against the promises of God,” and the 24th declares that “the law was our school-master,” or rather our “child-tender,” for the Greek word here literally means one who had the supervision of children when they went to school and when they returned from school, also when they were, at other times, separated from their parents, or other guardians.

Why could not a law have been given which could have

given life? Because “without shedding of blood is no remission.” (Hebrews 9:22.) Man, by his sin, had forfeited his life, for time and eternity. Therefore, the life's - blood was required in order to atone for him, or make satisfaction for his sin. But as man was himself under condemnation he could not offer a sacrifice which would atone for his sins, and, therefore, God needed to appoint a sinless sacrifice in his behalf. Christ was that sacrifice, and all other sacrifices were only of value by reason of their relation to him. See Romans 3:24-26.

What may we learn by considering the 26th and 27th verses? We may learn the divine conclusion from all that had been previously offered by Paul to his Galatian brethren, on this subject. In the 7th verse he had declared that by faith they were “the children of Abraham,” and he here declared that they were “the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Then he declared the value of baptism, by saying, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” What effect should this declaration of Paul concerning baptism have on the minds of Bible readers? It should cause them to believe that baptism is necessary to the salvation of an alien sinner as certainly as that it is necessary to “put on Christ.” But suppose some one should say the baptism here referred to is Spirit baptism? Our response should be that the evidence of Spirit baptism was the gift of tongues. See Acts 10:44-46; 11:16, 17. Then, in 1 Corinthians 14:22, we learn that the gift of tongues was intended for “a sign” to unbelievers, and not to make Christians of those who received that gift. This being true the effort, which is sometimes made, to break the force of this scripture, and certain others, by declaring that it refers to “Spirit baptism,” does not compliment either the head, or the heart, of those who make it.

What may we say of the 28th and 29th verses? The 28th verse implies that nationality, sex, and all other conditions of life, are ignored by the Gospel. The 29th verse indicates that Christians are heirs of the inheritance promised in the Gospel. See 1 Peter 1:4.

CHAPTER IV

What do we find recorded in this chapter? A record is here given of Paul's additional arguments against reliance on the Jewish law, and in favor of full reliance on the Gospel.

What did Paul first offer to the Christians in Galatia in his continuance of his argument? First of all he offered

to them an illustration, in which he stated that a child, who is an heir, does not differ from a servant in relation to his inheritance till “the time appointed of the father” to take possession of that inheritance. This illustration he used to indicate the condition of mankind, especially of the Jews, while the law was in force, and before the Gospel had been fully given.

What is meant by the expression “elements of the world” as found in the last part of the 3rd verse? The Greek word here translated “elements” in its singular form is defined to mean “a row, a straight rod, or rule; —an element; an element of the natural universe; an element or rudiment of any intellectual, or religious system.” In view of such meaning, and shades of meaning, we can understand how that word could be applied to the Jewish law with its elementary teaching which was to be fulfilled in the Gospel. In Hebrews 10:1 we learn that the law had a “shadow.” See Colossians 2:16, 17.

What may we learn by considering the 6th verse? We may learn that when by obedience to the Gospel we conform to the law of adoption, then God gives to us “the Spirit of adoption” which enables us to call on him as “Father.” See Romans 8:15. When a child is adopted into an earthly family the legal father cannot give that child an impartation of his spirit so that the adopted one will address him as “father” because of actual relationship, but the use of the name “father,” in such instance, must be entirely the result of training. But God does better than that for his children. He gives to them a “measure” of his Spirit, which is here designated “the Spirit of his Son.” To this Son he gave the Holy Spirit without “measure.” See John 3:34. As a result the Son had sufficient of the Holy Spirit to give the twelve Apostles power, also the Seventy, whom he sent forth to preach, and to work miracles. See Matthew 10:1-8; Luke 10:1-9. Besides, the Son had sufficient of that Spirit to bestow a measure of it on the eleven Apostles when he gave to them his last commission. See John 20:21-23. God's own Son received the Holy Spirit when he came up out of the water after his baptism (Matthew 3:16, 17), and his adopted children receive it when they finish their obedience to the law of adoption in their baptism. Therefore Paul wrote thus: “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.” The word “Abba” is the Chaldaic form of the Hebrew word “Ab,” which means “father.”

In view of all this, what may we say of those who deny that God gives to his adopted children a “measure” of his Spirit? We may say that they might as well deny that God gave to Jesus the Spirit without “measure.” We may also say of them that they cannot make a show of defense of their position, except by violation of I Peter 4:11.

What did Paul refer to when he used the expression “weak and beggarly elements,” mentioned in the 9th verse? The 10th verse indicates that he referred to the Jewish law as a system that was “weak” (Romans 8:3), and elementary, as set forth in the 3rd verse of this chapter; see also in Colossians 2:16, 17.

What is set forth in the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th verses? An exhortation is here set forth, based on Paul's relation to the Galatian brethren, and on their compassion for him in his physical weakness, also on the “blessedness” of their condition when they felt compassion in his behalf.

And what is set forth in the 16th, 17th and 18th verses? In the 16th verse Paul asked a question which intimated that the Galatian brethren probably had the disposition to regard him as their “enemy” because he had told them “the truth.” Is such a disposition common among mankind? It is the general disposition of sectarians, in all departments of life, and especially of sectarians in religion. Among all the sects are some who are not sectarians, and they are willing to hear truth beyond that which they have learned, and even hear the truth that condemns the errors that they hold. But this is not true of genuine sectarians. They dislike everything that condemns their errors, and regard every one who advocates that which condemns them as their “enemy.”

What is indicated in the 17th verse? The zeal of those Judaizing teachers, who were trying to lead the Galatian brethren back to the Jewish law, is first indicated; then, that those teachers wished to “exclude” or separate those brethren from others, that they might be affected, or benefitted, by them. This is clearly indicated in chapter 6:12, 13, and is the disposition of all sectarians in religion.

What may we say of the 18th verse? It sets forth a general truth in regard to zeal in behalf of that which is good.

What may we learn by considering the 19th and 20th verses? We may learn that Paul regarded the Galatian brethren as his “children” whom he had brought forth in the Gospel, and his anxiety for them was and would be intense, until, as he wrote, “Christ be formed in you.” He desired

to be present with them, and to change his manner toward them, for he was “in doubt” concerning them. Have Christians a right to feel “in doubt” about all persons, religiously, who resort to the Jewish law for authority in regard to any religious practice that they adopt? Certainly. in Romans 10:4 Paul declares that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes,” and as Jesus spoke of the Psalms as “law” (John 10:34; Psalm 82:6), all those do resort to the “law” who appeal to the last division of the Book of Psalms as authority for their use of instrumental music in worship. If they say that they do not make use of such music as something necessary to salvation, we may safely contradict them, for they regard it as necessary to draw persons to hear the Gospel, and hearing the Gospel is necessary to salvation. Besides, they regard it as necessary to the existence of their churches, for they will not try to establish churches, nor maintain them, without it. Thus it has been, and thus it is, with them. The present indication is that thus it will be with them till the end of their existence as a separate religious people.

What do we find in the 21st verse, and onward to the end of this chapter? We find a record of a parable, or an “allegory” to illustrate the difference between the Jewish law, or old covenant, and the “new covenant” as set forth in the gospel of Christ, also to set forth the difference between Mt. Sinai, in Arabia, where the law was given, and Jerusalem in Palestine, as a spiritual institution from which the Gospel was set forth. Finally that “allegory” was used to set forth the difference between Israel according to the flesh, and Israel according to the Spirit.

In what sense did the second wife of Abraham illustrate Mount Sinai, and earthly Jerusalem? The story of Abraham's second wife, when briefly stated, is this: She was chosen by Sarah, Abraham's first wife, and was given to him, as a second wife, because of the delay of God to fulfill his promise that Abraham should have an heir, and that he should be a blessing to all nations. This being true, the child that was born to Agar, or Hagar, was not a child of promise, but was strictly a result of a fleshly arrangement. Therefore the Holy Spirit could justly speak of Hagar as an illustration of a fleshly “covenant,” and speak of her descendants as an illustration of the children of that “covenant.” Sarah, on the other hand, was Abraham's first wife, and could, therefore, be justly spoken of, by the Holy Spirit, as an illustration of God's first purpose, which was

to save mankind by faith. Moreover, her child, Isaac, was a child of “promise,” and, in that sense, was a type of Christ. See chapter 3:16, also 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter.

What may we say of the 26th and 27th verses? The expression “Jerusalem which is above” must refer to the Church of Christ in general, and to the first church at Jerusalem in particular. The church of Christ at Jerusalem, was, in a certain sense, the mother of all other churches of Christ. Therefore, the city of Jerusalem had a two-fold relation. As the chief city of fleshly Israel it was illustrated by Hagar as a bondwoman with her descendants; but as a spiritual institution it was illustrated by Sarah, as a freewoman, with her descendants. Then, as Sarah was a barren woman, but, by divine arrangement and promise, bore a son, and through that son Christ was born, by whom the world is blessed, we can understand the application of the 27th verse. Moreover, God spoke of himself as “married” to the Jewish nation, and as its husband (Jeremiah 3:14; 31:32), but he did not thus speak of himself in regard to the Gentiles. Yet of the “desolate” Gentiles more persons were born into the kingdom of Christ than from among the Jews, who had God as their “husband.”

What may we learn by considering the 28th and 29th verses? We may learn that as Isaac was a child of “promise” so is every Christian. The promise to Abraham, that in his offspring should all the families of the earth be blessed, referred to Christ. See chapter 3:16. Then through Christ that promise embraces all Christians, for as Christians they are not born according to the flesh, nor are they made such by a law of fleshly ordinances, but they are made Christians by faith and the obedience of faith.

What may we say of the 30th and 31st verses of this chapter? They intensify the argument offered by Paul in the “allegory” of the two wives of Abraham. In the 30th verse the words of Sarah in regard to Hagar and her son are quoted. See Genesis 21:10, 12. Besides, those words are here endorsed, and are applied to the ending of the Jewish law. This was, in one sense, the consummation of Paul's argument against the continued enforcement of the Jewish law. That consummation is stated as a conclusion in the 31st verse, as may be seen in the declaration that Christians “are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. “ This means that they are not children of the law, as given on Mt. Sinai in Arabia, but are children of the Gospel, as sent forth from Jerusalem in Palestine.

In view of all this, what may we say to those religionists who contend that the Jewish law, or, at least, the ten commandments that were written on tables of stone, are in force upon Gentile Christians? We may say that Paul quotes and endorses the command, "Cast out the bond woman," but all such religionists, by implication, say, "No, do not cast her out, but retain her in some measure, and unite her children with the children of the freewoman." This is certainly implied in every plea that they make for a continuance of a part of the Jewish law. Notice, Paul declares, in the 25th verse, "For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Besides, he endorses the scripture which says, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." But those religionists who contend for a part of the Jewish law, as such, and would bind it on the Gentile Christians, say, by implication, that the bondwoman should not be cast out, but that her children should be heirs with the children of the freewoman. Certainly those who thus contend do not "speak as the oracles of God," and, therefore, they disregard 1 Peter 4:11. On the contrary, they venture to contradict Paul when he quotes, with endorsement, the scripture which commanded, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." As a result, the mentioned religionists are Judaized, and should be so regarded and denounced. The same is true of all others who try to enforce even one practice on the Church of Christ by the authority of the Old Testament. They are Judaizing teachers, and deserve to be reprov'd. If they will not repent they should be excluded from the confidence of all classes of mankind. Infant church-membership, musical instruments, and the observance of the seventh day of the week—these are the three practices which certain Protestant denominations have adopted from the Old Testament, and by which they show that they are Judaizers. Roman Catholics have adopted a priesthood as a special class, priestly robes, pictures and images of angels, an altar, the burning of incense, infant church-membership, and instrumental music. The Greek Catholics have adopted much of that which Rome has copied from the Old Testament. Those two sects have been the chief Judaizers. All Protestant sects have imitated them in one of these particulars, or more than one of them. By so doing they have proved themselves to be Judaizers. The unscriptural purpose of the original Judaizers is set forth in chapter 6:12, 13, and

their imitators have some measure of the same, purpose. They desire to “make a fair show in the flesh,” also to avoid “persecution for the cross of Christ,” and with one accord they “glory” in numbers. The original Judaizers desired to be popular with the Jews, as well as with Gentiles, and a desire for popularity is the secret of all modern Judaizing, especially the use of instrumental music in worship.

But before we leave this chapter we should consider further the 29th verse, “But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now.” The word “now” in that verse constantly covers the present, as time passes'. And it is still applicable. All Judaizing teachers, as they exist in the various sects, still persecute those who are “born after the Spirit,” as may be seen in their opposition to the churches of Christ, and to all Christians who do their full duty.

CHAPTER V

Of what are we informed in this chapter? In the former part of it we are informed of the continuance of Paul's argument against the “bondage” to the Jewish law, which would be inflicted on Gentile Christians if they would adopt the fleshly circumcision of the Jews. Then in the latter part of this chapter we are informed of the fact that the Galatian Christians had been “called unto liberty, “ and that they should not use their liberty “for an occasion to the flesh, but by love” they should “serve one another.” This is followed by certain declarations concerning the flesh, and the Spirit, in which “the works of the flesh” are named and denounced, and “the fruit of the Spirit” is defined and commended. The chapter is ended with an exhortation against being “desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

What may we say of the first four verses of this chapter? They set forth the danger to Gentile Christians of adopting the fleshly circumcision of the Jews. That which is here set forth, on that subject, implies that as fleshly circumcision is a part of the Jewish law, therefore, to adopt it would be to acknowledge the authority of the entire law which had been given to the Jews, and to seek justification by it. Then Paul informed the Galatian brethren that this meant that Christ had “become of no effect” unto them, and that they had “fallen from grace.” This is dreadful to consider. Those Galatians to whom Paul wrote had obeyed the Gospel aright. See chapter 1:

8,9. They had become Christians, and had “run well,” for a time. See 7th verse of this chapter. Yet for them to adopt one item of the Jewish law made Christ of “no effect” unto them, and made them “fallen from grace.” This indicates that the Gospel is easily perverted and annulled. In view of this we may inquire, If Abraham's circumcision, in the 1st Century of the Gospel Age, annulled the Gospel in those who accepted that circumcision, what will David's musical instruments accomplish, in the present century, in all who accept them? Judaizing teachers of the 1st Century taught that fleshly circumcision was necessary to salvation. See Acts 15:1. And Judaizing teachers of the present century teach that musical instruments in the song service are necessary to “draw sinners to hear the Gospel,” and, for that reason they imply that they are necessary to save them. In view of this their conclusions seem to be, Except you make use of such instruments you cannot save the people, and if you will not do all you can to save the people you will not be saved yourself. Such, and such like, conclusions are found in the reasonings of all those who contend for instrumental music in the song-service of the church. If those who reason thus, or imply such conclusions, ever were in grace they have certainly “fallen” from it, and, as a result “Christ is become of no effect” unto them.

What is indicated in the 5th and 6th verses? The value of “faith” is indicated, and, especially, “faith which worketh by love.” In view of the estimate here placed on “faith which worketh by love,” what may we say of those who declare that “faith is the greatest thing in this world,” or those who declare that “love is the greatest thing in this world”? We may say that neither “love” nor “faith” is the greatest, when considered by itself, but “faith which works by love” is certainly the greatest power for good found in mankind. By this power the sinner is moved to become a Christian, and the Christian is moved to continue faithful to God and Christ, also toward all mankind.

What may we learn by considering the 7th, 8th and 9th verses? We may learn that Paul had confidence in regard to the beginning of the new life of the Galatian brethren, but thought they had been hindered from obeying the truth. We may likewise learn that the “persuasion” on the part of the Galatians to go back to the law did not come from Paul, who had called them into the favor of Christ. See chapter 1:7. This implies that

it must have come from some other source. Then, in the 9th verse, we find a truth of universal application, and, as here used, it implied that a little leaven of Judaism would leaven the entire church. And this was actually accomplished in the entire number of the “churches of Christ,” and not simply in Galatia. The apostasy, as seen in the Roman and Greek Catholic churches, with all other sectarian bodies of religionists, abundantly testifies in this direction. Whether “a little leaven” exists in a wrong practice, or in a wrong doctrine, yet if it is not purged out it will leaven, or corrupt, the entire body with which it is connected. This is indicated by 1 Corinthians 5:6, when taken in its connection, and considered with the 9th verse of this chapter in its connection. The word “leaven” in its most general application means assimilation, or changing to its own condition, and, in either doctrine or practice, an error will, if tolerated, make the body, of which it is a part, like unto itself. Therefore, the leaven of error has a changing, corrupting, power, and it should be purged out, or discarded, with the utmost care. See I Corinthians 5:7, 8.

What may we learn by considering the 10th, 11th and 12th verses? We may learn of Paul's confidence in his Galatian brethren in regard to their future, also of his sentence against the one who had troubled them. We next learn that persecution of him, by the Jews, was in some measure based on the charge that he did not preach Jewish circumcision to the Gentiles. He believed that as a national mark the Jews had a right to be circumcised, and indicated his belief by circumcising Timothy, who was only a Jew by reason of his Jewish mother. See Acts 16:1-3. But Paul knew that those who were wholly of Gentile origin did not have any right to fleshly circumcision, even as a national mark. Therefore he wrote against it, and, as a result, he had been reported as the one who taught “all men everywhere against the people, and the law.” See Acts 21:28. As a further result, he was persecuted by certain classes of Jews. Fleshly circumcision was so dear to the Jews that Paul could not teach the truth with reference to it, even among the Gentiles, without being misunderstood and misrepresented. Is not the same true of the Judaizers who are now found in the religious world known as “Christendom”? It is. All the practices that they have borrowed from Judaism they hold so very tenaciously that those who intimate against them are constantly liable to be misunderstood, misrepresented

and persecuted. This is particularly true of that borrowed something known as “instrumental music in worship.”

The 12th verse of this chapter indicates that Paul desired that those who were troubling the Gentile churches, with their Judaizing ideas, should be “cut off.” This indicates that all Judaizers that are now troubling the churches of Christ should be “cut off,” or excluded. But, as the original Judaizers did with Paul, so their imitators have been disposed to do in modern times, namely, cut off those who oppose them.

What may we say of the 13th verse of this chapter? We learn here that Paul mentioned that his Galatian brethren had been “called unto liberty,” and then exhorted them not to use “liberty for an occasion to the flesh,” but that by love they should “serve one another.” In the 1st verse of this chapter he mentioned “liberty,” in the sense of freedom from the doctrinal sin of Jewish circumcision, and in the 13th verse he mentioned liberty in the sense of freedom from the practical sins of fleshly lusts.

What part of the law is fulfilled in the command, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself ... ? The law in its manward bearings, but not in its Godward bearings. The 1st and great command of the Jewish law was ‘Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’ See Matthew 22:36-38.

What is meant by the command, “Walk in the Spirit”? It cannot mean more nor less, in its application to us, than to observe the teachings of the Spirit, as given by the Apostles and inspired evangelists. The 16th verse declares that those who thus walk “shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”

What may we learn by considering the 17th verse? We may learn that the flesh, especially when its lusts are yielded to for a time, and an evil habit is formed, is sufficient to bring the spirit, or the mind, of him who has formed the evil habit, into bondage. See Romans 7:23. The word “spirit,” in the verse under consideration, refers to the spirit of man, or mind of man, rather than to the Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit. Of course, the lusts of the flesh are against the teachings of the Holy Spirit, but in Romans 7:23 we are informed of the power of the flesh over the mind, and this is the subject of which Paul here makes mention. The lusts of the flesh often interfere with the spirit of Christians in regard to doing that

which the Spirit of God commands; at least they interfere with that perfect obedience which is commanded by the Holy Spirit.

What of the expression, “led of the Spirit”? It is like the command, “Walk in the Spirit,” and refers to the teachings of the Holy Spirit through the inspired ones.

What may we say of the 19th, 20th and 21st verses? Paul sets forth in them “the works of the flesh” by name, and states the result of doing those works. What is embraced in the expression, “and such like,” as found in the 21st verse? It embraces the social dance, card-playing, theater going, horse-racing, gambling of all kinds, and every endorsement of gambling. Besides, the baseball, football, and every other human device that is, in itself, an extreme of excitement which endangers health and morals, is embraced in the expression under consideration.

What is indicated in the 22nd and 23rd verses? In these verses “the fruit of the Spirit,” in its outworkings in Christians, is mentioned, and the declaration is made that “against such there is no law.” This means that they are not condemned by any law.

And what of the 24th verse? It states that Christians have brought the flesh under control to such an extent that the flesh is said to be “crucified.” See 1 Corinthians 9:27.

What of the 25th verse? To “live in the Spirit” and to “walk in the Spirit” are expressions which refer to obedience to the teachings of the Holy Spirit as set forth in the words of the New Covenant scriptures.

What of the last verse of this chapter? It is an exhortation, which, if obeyed by all Christians, will keep them from strife and contention with each other. Those who are “desirous of vain glory,” or are ambitious for popularity, are constantly tempted to be guilty of “provoking one another,” and “envying one another.” This is seen in the “emulations,” or rivalries, among the sects, to excel each other in making a show, and, thus, in making a bid for popularity. As it is with the sects, in general, so it is with sectarians in particular, wherever found.

CHAPTER VI

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of Paul's exhortation in regard to restoring one who is “overtaken in a fault,” and bearing “one another's burdens,” and for “every man” to “prove his

own work.” We find also an exhortation in regard to supporting Gospel teachers, and against deception. This is followed by an exhortation in regard to faithfulness, and doing good to all mankind, especially to “the household of faith.” We then find a final reference to Judaizing teachers, and this is followed by reference to Paul's own glorying in the cross of Christ. Then he made another reference to circumcision, made mention of “a new creature,” and prayed for those who would walk by the rule he had given. He ended the letter with reference to himself, and his sufferings for Christ's sake, and then wrote his benediction.

Is there any difference between a person being “overtaken in a fault” and overtaking the fault by going wilfully into the way of temptation? There is much difference. Those who wish to do right should observe 1 Thessalonians 5:22, and Proverbs 4:14, 15. But those who are led to sin through impulse should, “in the spirit of meekness,” be restored. But suppose they become angry and refuse to be restored—then what should be done? They should not be approached on the subject till they will have had time to reflect over their wrong. Then, if, when approached, they become angry, they should not be urged nor irritated but should be left to themselves for a time. Besides, someone else should be selected to approach them with reference to their fault. By this method one of two conclusions will become evident, namely, either the erring ones will show that they are not Christians, and, perhaps, never were Christians, or they will be led to repent of the fault that is charged against them. If they continue to rebel they will need to be treated as “disorderly.” See 2 Thessalonians 3:6.

How may we harmonize the 2nd and 5th verses of this chapter? The translation of the 2nd verse has been given thus: “Bear ye with the weaknesses of one another.” But, accepting, the translation as given in the Common Version of the Sacred Text we may safely say that the 2nd verse should be considered in relation to the 1st, and the 5th verse should be considered in relation to the 4th. Therefore Christians should bear “one another's burdens” as those burdens are indicated in the 1st verse, and “every man shall bear his own burden” in the sense of proving “his own work,” as indicated in the 4th verse.

What may we learn by considering the 4th verse by itself? We may learn that when a man measures himself by the word of Cod, mid proves “his own work,” then he does

not need to look at the weaknesses of others in order to “have rejoicing.”

What may we say of the 7th and 8th verses? They ought to be inscribed on every mind, especially as mankind, generally, seem disposed to think that they can deceive God. Is the result of sin, as mentioned in these verses, the only punishment which God has threatened to inflict? No. The punishment here mentioned is the consequence of sin; but besides this God has threatened a penalty'. The consequence of sins of the flesh is corruption of the body; and will be apparent in this life, but the penalty for such sins is to be shut out of “the kingdom of God,” and will not be apparent till this life will have been ended, nor fully apparent till the final judgment. See chapter 5:21, also Matthew 25:41.

What may we say of the 9th and 10th verses? The former is an exhortation to faithfulness with a promise of reward, while the latter is an exhortation to benevolence, toward all mankind, especially toward Christians.

What may we say of the 12th and 13th verses? In them the Apostle Paul describes Judaizers, who were troubling the Gentile churches, and exposes their pretensions. In these verses he shows that they were not endeavoring to save the Gentile Christians, as in Acts 15:1 they pretended, but they were possessed of other motives. They desired “to make a fair show in the flesh,” to escape “persecution for the cross of Christ,” and to “glory” in the flesh of the Gentile Christians. This is the very disposition which modern Judaizers in some degree manifest. They begin by pretending to desire the salvation of mankind, but show that they wish to establish sects, or enlarge sects, and wish to make compromises in order to escape censure. This is especially true of those who contend for that phase of Judaism known as “instrumental music in worship.”

What of the 14th and 15th verses? In the 14th Paul contrasted himself and his glorying with that of the Judaizing teachers of whom he had written In the 15th he made his final declaration against fleshly circumcision, and, thereby, implied that it is not of any value to those who are in Christ, but declared that the important condition is to be “a new creature.”

What is meant by the word “rule” in the 16th verse? It is the Greek word from which we have the word “canon” in English, and which means an authoritative rule, or standard, of measuring.

How did Paul bear in his body “the marks of the Lord Jesus”? We may learn by reading 2 Corinthians 11:24, 25.

What may we say, in conclusion, concerning the letter of Paul to the Galatians? It is intensely argumentative, and ranks with the most vigorous documents of the Sacred Text. In the 1st and 2nd chapters of it Paul endeavored to establish full conviction of his apostleship, in the minds of his Galatian brethren, and then he endeavored to convince them of the sin of accepting the fleshly circumcision of the Jews. In both of these endeavors he offered masterly arguments, which indicate his divine inspiration.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER I

Of what did Paul write to the “saints” that were at Ephesus? In that which has been marked off, by some uninspired man, as the 1st chapter to them, Paul wrote of Jews, “who first trusted in Christ,” and then of Gentiles who afterwards “trusted” in him, and of that which God had done for each class. In the 2nd chapter he set forth, in several striking contrasts, that which the “saints” in Ephesus had become, by obedience to the Gospel, with that which they were by nature arid wicked works. In the 3rd chapter he set forth God's purpose to make the Gospel known to the Gentiles, and through the church composed of them to make it known to all mankind, and, in the meantime, to lead the “saints” at Ephesus into the perfection of the divine life. In the 4th chapter we find an exhortation to collective unity and individual perfection. In the 5th is an exhortation to Christians to become personally perfect, also an exhortation to husbands and wives. The last chapter is an exhortation to children, to parents, to servants, to masters, and then to all the saints. In that which he wrote to them all the apostle commanded them to be “strong in the Lord,” and then informed them how to become strong. In conclusion Paul wrote somewhat of himself.

What may we learn by considering the doctrine taught in the 1st chapter of this letter? We may learn, in general, that Paul classed himself with those who “first trusted in Christ” and who were “chosen” and “predestinated” in Christ, and that such choice and predestination was “according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. “ We may learn also that the obedient Gentiles should be “sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,” and that Paul prayed that God would give unto them “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.” Finally, we may learn that the Church is the body of Christ, “the fulness of him that filleth all in all. “

Is there any difference between “the saints” and “the faith-

ful in Christ Jesus”? No. The “saints” at Ephesus were “the faithful” at that place, and Paul intended this letter for “the faithful” everywhere else. In I Corinthians 1:2 Paul expressed himself more fully, and wrote to the “church of God” which was at Corinth, and to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

What may we say of the application of the 2nd and 3rd verses? The 2nd was applied “to the saints” at Ephesus, and the 3rd to Paul, and the other Apostles, all of whom trusted in Christ before the Gospel was publicly made known to the Gentiles.

Why should we say that the 3rd verse referred to the Apostles? The declaration “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings” indicates that this verse refers to the Apostles. So does the word “us” in the 4th, 5th and 6th verses, and the “we” in the 7th verse, also the expression “to usward” in the 8th verse. Then the expression “unto us” in the 9th verse, and the word “we” in the 11th, especially when these words and expressions are considered in the light of the 12th verse, which gives that which may be designated the “key” to unlock the problem of all that is set forth between the beginning of the 3rd verse and the end of the 11th. Besides, in Jeremiah 1:5 we find an indication of God's choice and ordination of men for official position. In Luke 1:5-17 we find another account of God's choice of a man for official position. In all such instances the choice was made without regard to obedience, or personal character resulting from obedience, and it was sometimes, if not always, made before the person chosen was born.

But were not both Jews and Gentiles, before they were born, elected —and chosen to become Christians? In 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14, and 1 Peter 1:1, 2, we learn the divine doctrine on this subject concerning both Gentiles and Jews. But in each of those scriptures we learn that the choosing, or election, was with reference to obedience to the Gospel, and not with reference to official work. Besides, God's choice of men for official work was always personal, while his choice to obedience was always general. The personal choice for official work did not consult the will of the one who was chosen, but the choice for personal character was so general that every person was left free to choose, or refuse, to obey. See the exhortation, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation,” as recorded in Acts 2:40.

What is meant by the expression “heavenly places” in the

3rd verse? The word “places” is not found in the Greek text, but the word translated “heavenly” is there, and means “heavenly, in respect to locality, also in respect to character.” It means also “divine, spiritual.” In this connection it seems to refer to character, and we may read thus: “heavenly characters in Christ Jesus.”

In what sense were the Apostles chosen in Christ “before the foundation of the world”? In 1 Peter 1:20 we are informed that Christ was “foreordained before the foundation of the world.” This indicates that the entire plan of God with reference to man was arranged in the divine mind “before the foundation of the world.” In 1 John 4:19 we learn of the end which God had in view when he planned the creation of man. He desired beings, in his own image, who would love him because he first loved them. By reason of this desire he planned the world in which mankind live, made man in his own image, placed him on trial, and planned to redeem him when he would sin. In so doing he purposed to show his love for mankind, and, thereby, to cause man to love him. Three reasons are revealed in the Bible for man to love God, and love him supremely. These reasons are found in that which God did for man in creation, in that which he has done for him in providence, and that which he has done, and is still doing, for him in redemption. But all this was planned before God created man, and even “before the foundation of the world.” There were some possibilities in man, which God did not concern himself to know beforehand, and, in certain respects, man has done worse than God thought he would do. See Genesis 6:5, 6; Jeremiah 7:31; 32:35. Yet this does not prevent us from concluding that God knew the end from the beginning, nor that the plan of the ages was mapped out in the divine mind before the first arrangement of that plan was established. God did not concern himself to know every motion of every fish that he created, nor of every animal that breathes the common air. Neither did he concern himself to know how far in the direction of wrong any human being, or any nation, would go. He knew that man could not go beyond the reach of infinite power, nor beyond the domain of infinite justice. Therefore, he placed man on the earth as its chief occupant, and allowed him to work out the problem of loyalty to his God. In working this problem he has generally abused the privileges that God has given to him, and has generally shown himself unfaithful to God.

What may we say of the 5th verse and onward to the end

of the 11th? All that is therein stated is but a description of the exalted condition, character, qualifications, and work of the Apostles, for they were those who “first trusted in Christ.” This was specially true of the original twelve, with Matthias to fill the place of Judas, who, by transgression, had fallen.

What are the truths taught in the 13th and 14th verses? The first is that hearing “the word of truth” was necessary to cause the Ephesians to believe, or trust, in Christ. This is in harmony with Acts 14:1, also Romans 10:17, and all else that is set forth in the Sacred Text on this subject. The next truth is that something was done for the believers at Ephesus which is here designated “sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” Then the next is that the Spirit with which the Ephesian believers were “sealed” is declared to have been “the earnest,” or pledge, of their “inheritance” until the redemption of the purchased possession. What is meant by the expression “redemption of the purchased possession”? In Acts 20:28 we read of the Church as that which Christ “hath purchased with his own blood,” and in Romans 8:23 we read of “the redemption of the body.” In the light of these scriptures we can understand that the expression “redemption of the purchased possession,” in the verse now under consideration, refers to the redemption of the body from the grave, which will be accomplished in the resurrection of the just.

But what is “that Holy Spirit of promise” mentioned in the last of the 13th verse? Romans 8:15 and Galatians 6:4, when taken together, indicate that the “Holy Spirit of promise” here mentioned is “the Spirit of adoption” which God sends forth into the hearts of all those who obey the Gospel sincerely, and who thereby conform to the law of adoption. God gave the Holy Spirit “not by measure” (John 3:34) to his Son when he came up out of the waters of his baptism, and he gives a “measure” of that same Spirit to all who sincerely obey the Gospel, which obedience as it relates to alien sinners is consummated when water baptism is completed. Then is fulfilled the promise, “and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,” as recorded in the last part of Acts 2:38.

Why do many disciples of Christ shrink from admitting the plain teaching that has just been offered? In the sectarian world so much error has been advocated with reference to the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the hearts of disobedient persons, that many disciples have been led to reject the doctrine of the Sacred Text in regard to the impar-

tation of the Spirit to obedient persons, and they try to explain away the words in which that doctrine is set forth. This is a serious mistake. Disciples of Christ should be willing to learn all that “the oracles of God” set forth, regardless of sectarian errors.

What do we find in the 17th verse, and onward to the end of this chapter? We find a statement of Paul's prayer for the “saints” at Ephesus, which he offered for them after he had heard of their “faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints.” Does that prayer indicate that Paul's desire concerning those “saints” was that they should be the ignorant, hesitating, halting, blundering, religionists that are found in many, if not all, of the churches, even the churches that now profess to be true to Christ? No. On the contrary, that prayer indicates that Paul, as an inspired man, who knew the Lord's will concerning Christians, desired the saints at Ephesus to be “enlightened” and to “know” concerning “the hope,” “the riches,” “the glory,” and “the exceeding greatness” of the power of God toward them. Every expression in that prayer indicates that the “saints” at Ephesus had the privilege of enjoying such knowledge of the divine might and power and glory as would elevate, ennoble, purify, and adorn, them. This indicates that all other “saints” have the same privilege, except that the saints who now live are not permitted to have special gifts, such as were bestowed on certain members of the Church in the 1st Century of its existence. In chapter 3:14-19 we find a record of another prayer of Paul for “the saints” at Ephesus, which further indicates the dignity, grandeur and glory of the position, relationship, and possibilities of all Christians.

What may we learn by considering the 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter? In these verses we may learn that the Church is “the body” through which Christ intended, and still intends, to operate on the world to accomplish his ends, even as the mind, or spirit, of man works through its fleshly body to accomplish its purposes in this world. We may learn also in these verses that, in behalf of the Church, God has put all things under the feet of Christ and has given him to be “head over all things.” Finally we may learn that the Church is declared to be “the fulness” of Christ. What evidence have we that the expression “him that filleth all in all” refers to Christ? We find it in 1 Corinthians 12:5, 6; Ephesians 4:10; Colossians 3:11.

As the Church is “the fulness” of Christ, do Christians need to join any man-made society, or any church that origi-

nated with men in order to obtain some moral or religious good that they cannot obtain in the Church of Christ? No. Everything that is good, in either doctrine or practice, worship or work, in regard to morality and religion, may be obtained in the Church of Christ. The Church is God's missionary society (chapter 3:10), and his endeavor society (chapter 4:1-3), and his financial society 1, Corinthians 16:1, 2), and his benevolent society (Galatians 6:10), and his musical society (chapter 5:19; Colossians 3:16), and his temperance society (2 Peter 1:6). In view of all this we can understand the meaning of the declaration that the Church is "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." We can understand also the meaning of the declaration that "the Church" is "the pillar and ground of the truth," as found in 1 Timothy. 3:15. We can understand likewise why Paul declared in Colossians 2:10 that "Christians are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power." In view of all this we may safely conclude that all doctrines and practices which imply that the Church of Christ is defective, either in regard to morality or religion, are the outgrowth of irreverence and presumption, if not of stubbornness and rebellion.

CHAPTER II

Of what are Bible readers informed in the chapter now before us? We are informed of the great differences between the condition of the "saints" at Ephesus and all Gentile sinners. These differences are indicated by mention of the changes which had been wrought in those "saints" by their obedience to "the word of truth," as referred to in the 13th verse of the preceding chapter.

What is meant by the word "quickened," as found in this chapter? It means made alive. The word "quick" is not as generally used now as formerly, to express the idea of life or living. Yet we use it in that sense when we speak of cutting a finger nail "to the quick."

What may we say of the 1st verse of this chapter? It sets forth the change that is wrought when an alien sinner becomes a Christian, as a change from death to life.

And what of the 2nd verse? It indicates that all who are in the condition it describes are "dead in trespasses and sins." What is meant by the expression, "course of this world"? We are not definitely informed, but in the light of the 3rd verse we are left to conclude that it means what is mentioned in 1 John 2:16. Those who walk "according to the course of this world" walk in "the just of

the flesh, and the just of The eyes, and the pride of life. Those who walk thus are ill the service of the devil. Why is the devil here designated “the prince of the power of the air”? We are not informed, except that in John 14:30 he is designated as “the prince of this world.”

What is meant by the word “conversation” in the 3rd verse of this chapter, as given in the Common Version of the Sacred Text? The Greek word here found means “conversation, mode of life, conduct, deportment.” Therefore, we may read this verse thus: “Among whom we all had our conduct in times past.”

What is referred to in the declaration, “and were by nature the children of wrath even as others”? Romans 5:12,14 inform us that death came upon all mankind by reason of Adam's transgression. In this sense all of the human race are “by nature the children of wrath.” Does this mean that mankind, by nature, have guilt resting on them or charged against them? It does not. The death of the body is a physical infliction which results from separation from the tree of life, but the guilt of sin is a spiritual infliction imposed by reason of personal sin.

What may we learn by considering the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th verses? We may learn that the salvation of sinners is here declared to be of God's grace or favor, also that the salvation of alien sinners is a change so great that it is justly illustrated by reference to making the dead alive, and raising them up. Besides, the mentioned change is further declared to be a making alive “with Christ” of those who “were dead in sins,” and even raising them up to sit in heavenly places in Christ. In these declarations we find a strong reason for alien sinners to become alarmed at their condition, and a strong reason why Christians should struggle to remain faithful to Christ. The 7th verse of this chapter especially indicates that God's “kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” will be to his glory “in the ages to come.”

What is taught in the 8th verse? Salvation is the general doctrine of that verse, and it is declared to be “the gift of God” by his divine “grace,” or favor, and through “faith” on the part of those who become partakers of that salvation. What may we say to those who teach that the “grace” here spoken of is referred to as “the gift of God,” or that the “faith” here spoken of is referred to as “the gift of God”? We may safely say that the Greek text will not bear such a construction, for the Greek word here

translated by the word “that” does not agree with either the Greek word for “grace” or the word for “faith.” Besides, the subject under consideration by Paul in this chapter is “salvation,” while the divine “grace” here spoken of is mentioned only as a cause, on the divine side, while “faith,” on the part of man, is mentioned only as a condition on the human side. Paul here declared that the Ephesian brethren were “saved,” and then stated the chief reason on the divine side and the chief reason on the human side. Therefore the idea is, “and that [salvation] not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” by God’s “grace” and through “faith” on the part of man.

What may we say of the 9th and 10th verses? They set forth two ideas, one negative, and the other affirmative, and mention a reason for both. Besides, the 10th verse indicates that the change wrought in a Gentile sinner in making him a Christian is so great that it is expressed by the word “created.” This is the strongest word that could be used to express the greatness of that change.

What may we say of the 11th, 12th and 13th verses? In the 11th Paul exhorted The saints at Ephesus to “remember” what they “were,” and what they were “called in time past.” The 12th verse definitely states that they were “aliens” and “strangers” and were without “hope” and “without God in the world.” Then the 13th verse definitely states that they were not any longer in that condition, but were “made nigh by the blood of Christ.” This is explained in the 19th verse.

What is set forth in the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th verses? In The 14th verse Christ is referred to as “our peace,” and as having made both Jews and Gentiles, who had obeyed the Gospel, as one people, and then states that he accomplished this by breaking down “the middle wall of partition,” which consisted of the Jewish law as is explained in the 15th verse. The Jewish law had previously held Jews and Gentiles separated, but when that law was fulfilled it did not longer exist as a separation or as “the middle wall of partition between them.” In the 16th verse Paul makes mention of the reconciliation, or restoring to favor, which Christ intended to accomplish for both Jews and Gentiles. These two classes are spoken of in Acts 2 - 39. In the 18th verse we find mention made of the end accomplished by the conversion to Christ of both Jews and Gentiles.

And what may we say of the 19th verse and onward to

the end of this chapter? Certain conclusions are mentioned in these verses, as results from the change accomplished in becoming Christians. These conclusions set forth that Christians “are fellow citizens with the saints,” are “of the household of God,” are “built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets,” are growing “unto a holy temple in the Lord,” and are “builded together for a habitation of God through the spirit.” In these conclusions are found reasons that should be sufficient to induce all alien sinners to become Christians, and all Christians to keep themselves unspotted from the world.

Is there anything in the 19th verse which pertains to foreign missions? Yes. This verse implies that all alien sinners are “foreigners,” and that every church of Christ is a foreign missionary society in proportion as it endeavors to convert alien sinners to Christ, and thus lead them to become fellow citizens with the saints. Moreover, this verse implies that all preachers of Christ, and all other members of the Church of Christ, are foreign missionaries in proportion as they endeavor to lead alien sinners to become Christians. In view of the implications of this 19th verse, as just stated, what may we say of those disciples who have divided the churches of Christ by organizing a special society to convert “foreigners”? We may say that they have not spoken “as the oracles of God,” in regard to the meaning of the word “foreigners,” and have adopted the political, or geographical, meaning of that word instead of its scriptural meaning. As a result they have considered only those as “foreigners” who are foreign to themselves, and have, thereby, made of themselves a standard of measuring instead of measuring by the Lord Jesus Christ. As a further result they have become slanderers of all those who reject them as standards of measuring, and insist on regarding the Lord Jesus Christ as the standard by which to measure “foreigners,” and his Church as the viewpoint from which to regard them as “foreigners.” As all alien sinners are “foreigners” to Christ, and all Christians are “fellow citizens with the saints,” a reasonable excuse cannot be made for the blunder that has been made by those disciples who have divided the churches of Christ by organizing foreign missionary societies, or any other kind of societies to do missionary work.

CHAPTER III

Of what are we informed in this chapter? On the basis of the revelations made in the preceding chapter, Paul here

wrote to the saints at Ephesus concerning his relation to the Gospel, and the divine purpose concerning the Church in regard to making known the Gospel, likewise his prayer in behalf of those saints. The chapter is ended with a benediction which indicates God's purpose to be glorified in the Church during all ages.

Why did Paul write that the Gospel was a “mystery”? In Romans 16:25, 26 we learn that the Gospel was a mystery while it was involved, or wrapped, in figures and shadows, and thus before it was made known in fact and form. But after it was plainly made known it was not any longer a mystery, at least in its manward bearings. Everything else is a mystery before it is made known to the human understanding or is understood. The letters of the alphabet, for instance, are a mystery to the child till their relation to words is understood, and even then they are mysterious till the relation of words to sentences is in some degree understood.

What may we safely say to those who declare that the Gospel is still a mystery? It is a mystery to them only because they do not understand it, and they do not understand it because they have not studied it, but not because the Gospel is not plainly revealed in the New Testament. Its facts are revealed in the Gospel records as written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; its commands and promises to alien sinners are revealed in the Book of Acts, and its commands and promises to Christians are revealed in the Epistles or Letters which make up the last part of the New Testament.

What was the special “mystery” to which Paul referred in the beginning of this chapter? The 5th and 6th verses inform us.

What do we find in the 7th and 8th verses? Certain statements of Paul concerning his relation to the preaching of the Gospel are here found. Then in the 9th verse we find the purpose of his preaching mentioned; in the 10th verse we find mention made of the relation of the Church to making known the Gospel “in heavenly places,” or rather, in the spiritual regions or domains, where spiritual characters are formed. Then in the 11th verse we find that the divine purpose in regard to the Church and the Gospel was “eternal,” and, therefore, was not a divine after-thought. The 10th and 11th verses taken together indicate that the Church was divinely intended to be God's missionary society, and he never intimated that any other society for missionary

purposes should be organized. In 1 Thessalonians 1:8 we find a statement of that which the church in Thessalonica had done in missionary work, and an indication of that which every other church should do to the utmost of its power.

What may we learn by considering the 14th verse, and on. ward to the close of the 19th? We may learn that the whole family in heaven and earth is named of Christ, also that Paul prayed for the “saints” at Ephesus in terms which indicate that Christians are intended to be high, grand, exalted, characters, and should live in the closest possible relation to God and Christ. If Christians live according to their privileges, as here mentioned, will it be possible for them to become lonesome and unhappy so that they will need to read novels, and go to theaters, or play games, in order to occupy their time? No. The divine purpose is that Christians shall be “filled with all the fulness of God” and when thus filled they will certainly be made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

What of the last verse of this chapter? It indicates that God's purpose is to be glorified in the Church in all ages, and does not intimate that he desires to be glorified, nor can be glorified, in any human institution. This verse is God's eternal veto of all human societies that man may pretend to establish for his glory.

Of what disposition are all such societies the outworkings? The disposition of those who built the tower of Babel in the land of Shinar. In Genesis 11:4 we learn that they wished to arrange a plan of their own by which to reach unto heaven, also that they wished to “make . . . a name” for themselves, and make a human bond of union lest they be “scattered abroad.” Such is the disposition in some measure of all religious creed makers, and religious society organizers, and religious college builders, wherever found, and babel, Babylon, or confusion, is the result.

CHAPTER IV

What saith the Scriptures here recorded? In this chapter Paul besought, or exhorted, that the saints at Ephesus should endeavor to be united, and he stated the items of doctrine on which unity would be required of them. Then he explained how unity could be accomplished in them. Next he exhorted them not to walk as did other Gentiles, whose condition and conduct he briefly described, but that they should “put off “ that which was “corrupt according to the

deceitful lusts,” and all else that was wrong. The chapter is elided with an exhortation to be personally kind and forgiving.

What may we say of the 3rd verse? It indicates that the Lord intended that his Church should be the Lord's endeavor society, for Paul here exhorted that it should endeavor “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” This is in harmony with the Savior's prayer for unity, and with Paul's exhortation to be “perfectly joined together.” See John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10. The Church, as described in the New Testament, did not have any endeavor society as an adjunct or help, neither did it have any other kind of a society as an attachment to do work of any kind.

What may we learn by considering the 4th, 5th and 6th verses? We may learn that Paul here implies that all Christians should be united in regard to the one “body,” or Church, and the one “Spirit,” the one “hope,” the one “Lord, one faith, one baptism,”. and “one God and Father of all. “Will unity in regard to these items of doctrine insure unity in regard to all others? They certainly will if fully understood and properly applied. For instance, if the Church is understood as the “one body” that the Lord intends to work through among mankind, then all other bodies or organizations for religious purposes are excluded. Then, if the teaching of the “one Spirit” is fully understood and properly applied certainly every other spirit, and the teaching of every other spirit, will be excluded. If the “one hope” that is here mentioned is considered aright it will be understood as the hope of the resurrection through Christ, and of final entrance into the everlasting kingdom. The “one Lord” here referred to is “the head” of the Church, and King of his kingdom, and, therefore, the only legislator for his people. This will exclude all human legislation, and will abolish all creeds, confessions of faith, constitutions, and by-laws of a religious kind. The “one faith” here mentioned is the one Gospel, or one doctrine, which Christ gave for the salvation of mankind, and this doctrine was intended to exclude all others as a means of salvation from sin. The “one baptism” here mentioned, when considered, understood and applied according to the New Testament teaching, excludes all supposed baptisms and substitutes for baptism, likewise all so-called “modes of baptism.” Finally, the “one God and Father of all,” who is above all, and through all, and in “all” of his people, does not leave place nor need for any other. God, nor spiritual

father; especially does he not, leave room, nor need, for such a father as the pope of Rome, or the Czar of Russia, is supposed by many to be. The former of those characters pretends to be the head of the Latin Catholic church, while the latter is accepted as the head of the Greek Catholic church. Each of them is addressed as “father” by those who accept him as their spiritual head. But the God of heaven and earth is “the Father of all,” and therefore all others who pretend to be spiritual fathers are only usurpers or pretenders. The only exception to this is indicated in 1 Corinthians 4:15. Paul said to the Corinthian saints: “I have begotten you through the gospel,” and, in that sense, he was a “father” unto them. But that excludes all from being their “fathers” who had not “begotten” them “through the gospel.” This is not only implied, but is positively declared, in the verse under consideration.

What may we say of the 7th verse and onward to the end of the 17th? These verses all refer to the spiritual gifts that were bestowed in order to establish the New Testament Church and until the New Covenant Scriptures could be fully given. They were necessary in establishing the Church, even as scaffolding is necessary in building a house. But when a house is completed the scaffolding is no longer necessary, and after the Church had been established among the Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles, then spiritual gifts soon ceased to be given. Do the New Covenant Scriptures furnish the Church with all the truth that the spiritual gifts of inspired ones in the Church of Christ furnished them? Yes, at least all the truth except such as certain prophets gave who foretold certain events. See Acts 11:27, 28; 21:10, 11. Some of these prophets are not specially mentioned and what they said is not recorded. With these exceptions the churches of Christ may now have all the truth that was offered to such churches in the first century of their existence.

Were the characters mentioned in the 11th verse peculiar to the first century of the existence of the churches of Christ? They were, as specially gifted characters, for the qualifications of bishops, or elders, and deacons, did not require special gifts. See 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9. Then the letters to Timothy and Titus indicate that evangelists were not necessarily gifted. Though Timothy is mentioned as possessing some gift (1 Timothy 4:14), yet we are not informed what it was. At the same time we are certain that it was not such a gift as informed him of all that God required of him, for Paul wrote to him in order to

inform him on that subject. This is especially evident in 1 Timothy 3:15.

What is referred to by the expression “led captivity captive,” as found in the eighth verse of this chapter? We may learn by considering 2 Timothy 1:10, and Hebrews 2:14, 15. The assurance that Christ had been raised from the dead, not to die any more, was fully given, “when he ascended up on high,” or returned to heaven. Therefore, he then showed that he had “abolished death” by depriving death of his power to hold mankind perpetually in the grave, and thus it was that he delivered “them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage;” that is, they were subject to the fear of continued bondage to the power of death. But when Christ ascended to heaven he gave the final assurance that he had broken the power of death, and thus it was that he “led captivity captive , or delivered from the fear of continued captivity those who had been under the power of that captivity, and those who feared such captivity.

In view of all this, what should we say to those who declare that paradise was abolished when Christ ascended to heaven? We should say, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” Besides, we should refer them to Acts 2:34, and to 2 Corinthians 12:1-4. In each of those scriptures we learn that “paradise” had not been then abolished, for, as David had not ascended, as Christ had, he must have been in paradise, and Paul said he knew a man “caught up into paradise. Taking those scriptures together we find the most positive evidence that those certainly err who say that Christ abolished paradise when he ascended to heaven. In other words, they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.”

In view of the 13th, 14th and 15th verses, what may we say of those disciples who seem satisfied because they have been baptized and do not try to study the Bible so as to learn what it sets forth, and do not endeavor to grow in their spiritual life? They likewise “err, not knowing the scriptures.” They do not seem to understand that they need to study the divine word so as to understand it in order to make advancement in their spiritual life, and in order to be strengthened against teachers of error, who will endeavor to “deceive” them, and turn them aside from “the simplicity that is in Christ.” See 2 Corinthians 11:3.

What may we learn by considering the 16th verse? That

verse, by implication, likens the Church to a human body which is assisted in its work by “that which every joint supplieth,” and this implies that the church is benefitted by that which every member does that is right to be done.

What is stated in the 17th, 18th and 19th verses? The condition and conduct of the unconverted Gentiles is stated, and the “saints” at Ephesus were warned not to “walk” as those Gentiles walked. Then Paul stated to them in the 20th verse that they had “not so learned Christ;” that is, they had not learned of Christ that they should imitate the unbelieving Gentiles.

What may we say of the 21st verse and onward to the end of the chapter? A series of exhortations is therein set forth. Are those exhortations all affirmative? No. Some of them are negative. That is to say, Paul informed those whom he addressed of that which they should do, and of that which they should not do. Was that the most popular style of address? No, but it was the most wholesome. The most popular style is to set forth truth, and let error alone; the most unpopular style is to expose error rather than to advocate truth. But the style found in the Bible is a mixture of the affirmative and the negative. It sets forth and advocates that which is right; it also exposes and opposes that which is wrong.

What is meant by the expression, “old man,” in the 22nd verse? The last part of that verse informs us that it means that which is “corrupt.” This implies that “the old man” consists of that which inclines man to say and do that which will corrupt him. See I John 2:16. The lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life make up the disposition which is designated “the carnal mind” (Romans 8:7), and this is “the old man” that is here described as “corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” That “old man” is to be “put off” by all Christians by refusing to yield to his suggestions, and they are commanded to be “renewed in the spirit of” their “mind,” and to “put on the new man, who, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.” See Romans 12:1,2.

Can Christians be angry and sin not? Yes, if they will not cherish their anger they will soon learn to overcome it entirely, or, at least, hold it under control. What should we say to those who declare that to be angry is in itself a sin? We should refer them to Psalm 7:11, and to Mark 3:5, and inquire of them whether God and Christ require us to be better than they are,

What is indicated in the 32nd verse? The indication here is that Christians should not cherish malice, nor hatred against each other. Can Christians always settle their troubles? They can if those on both sides of a trouble will act the part of Christians. The professed Christians who will not act the part of Christians show that they are not Christians in reality, but are only pretenders.

In view of the last part of this verse, what may we say of those who declare that Christians should not pray to the Father “for Christ's sake”? We may say they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures,” for this scripture certainly declares that “God, for Christ's sake,” has forgiven us, and this means on Christ's account, or because of Him. He ever lives to make intercession for those who come unto God by Him. See Hebrews 7:25. Therefore Christians may pray to God and make requests to be answered “for Christ's sake.”

CHAPTER V

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed that Paul exhorted the “saints” at Ephesus to be “followers of God as dear children,” and explained to them the meaning, or bearing, of such an exhortation.

How can Christians be “followers” of God? They can be imitators of Him, as He is made known through Christ. The Greek word here translated “followers” means “imitators,” and we may read this verse thus: “Be ye, therefore, imitators of God as dear children.”

In what sense was the death of Christ “an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor”? God loved mankind and desired to show his love for them so as to break down the enmity and win their love. Therefore, when the divine Being, whom the Apostle John declared was “the Word,” became a partaker of his Father's love, and submitted himself to his Father's will, even unto death, he made an offering so precious to the Father that it is here declared to be a “sweet-smelling savor,” or a delightful fragrance. An earthly, father may sometimes feel something of what this expression, “sweet-smelling savor,” means, when his son endures hardship and suffering in order to please his father, or because he is a partaker of his father's desires.

What is meant by the word “covetousness”? The Greek word here translated “covetousness” means “an, inordinate desire for riches, grasping, overreaching, extortion, a

scheme of extortion.” In view of such meaning, arid shades of meaning, we can clearly understand that the word “covetousness” means greediness in getting gain. The greedy man does not know when he has enough, and thus desires more than his share, and this is “covetousness.” In Colossians 3:5 we learn that “covetousness is idolatry.” See also the 5th verse of this chapter. This implies that a greedy man is an “idolater” because he makes an idol God of that which he covets. Like the Jews, mentioned in Ezekiel 14th chapter, he sets up his idol in his heart. In view of this, what may be safely said of all professed Christians who, by reason of “covetousness,” will not give into “the collection for the saints” as they are prospered of the Lord? They are idolaters and will be lost if they do not repent.

What of the 14th verse of this chapter? Paul here forbids all corrupt speech, and this means all shades and grades of vulgarity, even such as is found in stories, or incidents, which Christians may feel disposed to relate. Such speech should not be repeated, even in quotation marks, neither should profane speech be repeated in quoting another's language. Christians should not be guilty of second-hand swearing nor vulgarity; that is, they should not swear, nor repeat vulgar words, over the signature of other persons, nor in quoting their sayings.

What is meant by the word “jesting,” as here used? The Greek word here translated “jesting,” means “facetiousness, pleasantry, buffoonery, ribaldry.” In view of this we can understand that the practice of playing on words, or punning, is here condemned. In other words, Christians should not use degrading speech of any kind, nor waste their time in talking frivolously. What is the meaning of the word “convenient,” as used in the Common Version of this verse? Another version adopts the word “becoming,” and thus instructs us to read thus: “which are not becoming.”

What is referred to by the word “darkness” in the 8th verse? We are informed in Acts 26:18. All alien sinners were hi “darkness” while in their alienated condition.

What may we say of Paul's definition of “light,” as recorded in the 13th verse? It is brief and comprehensive and it sets forth a general definition of light in all departments.

What is meant by walking “circumspectly,” as commanded in the 15th verse? The Greek word here translated “cir-

cumspectly” means “diligently, accurately.” This implies that we shall be careful in our conduct.

Can Christians or any others redeem time that they have wasted? In one sense they cannot, but in another they can.

They cannot get back, nor secure again, the time that is gone, yet they may be so diligent in doing right that they may, in some measure, make up for the time that has been wasted by them. In that sense time may be redeemed.

What may we learn by considering the 19th verse? We may learn that the Lord desires heart-service in the worship which we render to him. This is in harmony with John 4:23, 24; also with 1 Corinthians 14:15.

Is there any word used in the Greek text of this verse which will justify the use of instrumental music in religious worship? No. The Greek word which is here used is depended on by certain persons to help them to introduce musical instruments into the worship of God through Christ, but it does not authorize anything of that kind. Its meaning is “to move by a touch, to twitch to touch, strike, to pluck, to twang, as when one plucks a hair or plucks the string of an instrument.” In view of such meaning, and shades of meaning, all who are willing to be convinced of the truth on this question can understand that the idea of musical instrument is not in this word, any more than the idea of water is in the Greek word for baptism. In the former instance the idea of “musical instrument” is connected with the word by association, and the same is true of the idea of water in the latter instance. But water is not in the Greek word for baptism, neither is musical instrument in the Greek word for singing.

What may we learn by considering the 20th verse of this chapter? We may learn that Christians should be very thankful, and that all their thanksgiving should be offered to God in the name of Christ.

Do the 22nd, 23rd and 24th verses mean that wives should submit themselves to their husbands “in everything”? Yes, in everything with reference to which husbands have a right to command. But if a husband of any wife would command her to do contrary to the will of Christ, then Acts 5:29 should be considered. In the affairs of this life the husband is the head of the wife, but in regard to religion the Lord Jesus Christ is the head. An Old Testament saint could say, “But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” See Joshua 24-15. But New Testament saints cannot Justly say that much. On the contrary, a

Christian can only say, As for me, I will serve the Lord. A man cannot speak for his wife, nor even for his child, in regard to religion.

Do wives generally obey their husbands? No. The rule is, especially in the United States of America, that they are disobedient and disrespectful toward their husbands. In many instances they are perverse and tyrannical. Some of them act the part that Delilah did toward her husband. See Judges 16th chapter. The chief exceptions to such conduct on the part of wives, in the mentioned country, is in those instances in which the husband is an overbearing and tyrannical specimen of humanity. He demands obedience and will have it, even if in so doing he shows himself to be a contemptible character. What is the secret of the mentioned rebellion on the part of wives toward their husbands? Natural irreverence, bad literature, false views of education, flattery on the part of preachers, a lack of Bible study, and last, but not least, that contemptible something called "pride." Are all husbands worthy of obedience? No. But a man who is not worthy to be obeyed by his wife should not have been accepted by the woman who married him. A woman who has a scriptural view of marriage relation will not accept any man to be her husband for whom she cannot have sufficient respect to obey him wherein he has the right to command. Husbands and wives should be mutual counselors and helpers, and should be united in their decisions. But if they cannot unite then the Bible requires that the wife shall yield to her husband's decisions, and not rebel against him, nor try to make his decisions a failure, nor taunt him if they do fail. He will feel deeply enough the effect of his failures without taunting or nagging from his wife. If a wife can convince her husband of an error by reasoning she is at liberty to do so, but she should refrain from threatening, taunting, and nagging.

CHAPTER VI

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Paul's instructions to children in regard to their parents, and parents in regard to their children, are here set forth. Next We find his instructions to servants in regard to their masters, and to masters in regard to their servants. Then the apostle wrote to all the saints at Ephesus to be strong in the Lord, and informed them how to be strong. The chapter is ended with a few remarks by Paul concerning himself and mention of a brother named Tychicus, followed by the apostolic, benediction.

Are children required to obey their parents if commanded by them to lie, or steal, or swear, or do anything else that is wrong? No. In Acts 5:29 we learn what children should do if commanded by their parents to do wrong. But with this exception children should obey their parents in all things.

May mothers teach their children in the Bible and help to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”? Yes. The mother is the child's first teacher, according to nature, as God arranged it, and the mother who is a Christian will more generally do her duty, in that respect, than the father will. In view of this only the “fathers” are here commanded to bring up their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” But technical reasoning might be here used, and all mothers might be thereby excluded from teaching their children in the word of the Lord, simply because they are not commanded in so many words to do so. Such reasoning, however, is destructive but not constructive; it tends to break down, but not build up; and according to it many great truths in temporal as well as spiritual things would have to be discarded.

What effect will the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th verses have on those who occupy the position of servants, if they will consider them aright? To say the least, they will be good servants. They will not be shiftless, trifling, nor, in any sense, unfaithful. Then the 9th verse, if observed by those who occupy the position of masters, will certainly make them good masters. The New Covenant Scriptures, if adopted by mankind, will make them better in all of life's relations. The constant tendency of those Scriptures is to elevate, ennoble, purify, and adorn, all those who practically accept them.

What may we say of the 10th verse and onward to the end of the 19th? Instructions are therein given which, to the extent that they are adopted by Christians, will make them “strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.” The Christian is regarded by the Apostle Paul as a soldier, and, in the scriptures now before us, he mentions the armor, or equipments, which the Christian, as a soldier, must have in order to stand against “the wiles of the devil.” Satan has had much experience in deceiving mankind, and Christians need to “put on the whole armor of God” in order to stand against him. Then let us not deceive ourselves by supposing that we do not need “the whole armor of God.”

What is indicated by the 12th verse? This verse indicates

that the conflict here mentioned was against such powers as were opposed to the Gospel. For instance, the powers of heathen Rome, and the leaders among the Jews, were against the Gospel, and Paul had conflicts with them, even as Christians now have conflicts with the Romish priesthood, all the sectarian clergy, and all other false teachers, as well as with the advocates of immorality. At the same time all Christians need to combat their own flesh and blood as Paul did. See 1 Corinthians 9:27.

What is meant by the different parts of the armor as here mentioned? To have the “loins girt about with truth” means to tell the truth at all times. To have “on the breastplate of righteousness” means to do right at all times. To have the “feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” means to be ready always to do all that the Gospel requires of us. To take “the shield of faith” means to have an unwavering faith in God and Christ, and in the final triumph of truth. To “take the helmet of salvation” means to take “the hope of salvation” as a constant protection. See I Thessalonians 5:8. Finally, to take “the sword of the Spirit,” is to take the word of God as a weapon with which to attack the wrong doctrines and other errors that are in the world.

And what may we say of the 18th verse? It informs us that Christians should pray much for all other Christians as well as for themselves. Then the 19th verse informs us that Christians should pray for the preachers of Christ. Paul needed the prayers of “the saints” at Ephesus, and certainly the preachers of Christ now need the prayers of each other and of all other Christians.

May any preacher who now lives be justly called “an ambassador”? No. The Greek word, in the 20th verse of this chapter, which is translated by the expression “I am an ambassador,” means “to be elder; to be an ambassador, perform the duties of an ambassador.” In 2 Corinthians 5:20 we learn that “ambassadors for Christ” could speak in Christ's stead, and thus they had authority to transact business for him. This is not true of preachers who are not inspired as the Apostles were.

In conclusion, what may we say of the letter to the Ephesians as such? It is somewhat doctrinal, and is intensely practical. Its influence on all who study it will be to impress their minds with the exalted character and condition of Christians and with the importance of being intelligent, united, and strong, Christians. It is worthy of its position

among inspired documents and should be studied with care by all who wish to “know the love of Christ which passes knowledge,” and “be filled with all the fulness of God.”

PHILIPPIANS

CHAPTER I

What are the general subjects of which Paul wrote in this letter? We may say that he wrote of assurance, comfort, humility, purity, warning, and that this letter, as such, is practical rather than doctrinal, and hortatory rather than argumentative.

And what may we say of the 1st chapter? After his salutation, or introductory, Paul assured the saints at Philippi of his thanksgiving and prayers in their behalf, also assured them that his bonds had resulted in a furtherance of the Gospel. Then Paul wrote of his own condition of mind in regard to the question of closing his ministry, after which he exhorted the saints at Philippi with reference to their conversation and courage, in view of that which they should endure for the sake of Christ.

Who were the “bishops” mentioned in the 1st verse of this chapter? They were the “overseers,” or official elders, of the church. See Acts 20:17, 28. The same Greek word which is here translated by the word “bishops” is translated by the word “overseers” in Acts 20:28.

What may we say of the 3rd verse and onward to the end of the 8th? In these verses we find evidence that the saints at Philippi had a very tender hold on Paul's affections; and this is not a matter of surprise when we consider that which he suffered at the time that the Philippian jailer was converted. See Acts 16:16-40.

Did that church give to Paul any evidence of appreciation of him? In the 5th verse of this chapter and in chapter 4:1,5,16 we learn that the saints at Philippi were careful in regard to Paul's temporal needs.

What may we learn by considering the 9th, 10th and 11th verses? We may learn that Paul prayed for the church at Philippi and that the burden of his prayer was that it might “abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment,” also that it might “approve things that are excellent,” or distinguish things that differ, and “be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,” and, finally, that

it might be “filled with the fruits of righteousness.” Can any one “approve things that are excellent” without distinguishing things that differ? No. In order to approve that which is good, a clear discrimination between that which is good and that which is evil is always necessary. Is there any need now for Christians to distinguish things that differ? There is, and there never was a time in which the difficulty was as great as it now is to distinguish things that differ in religious affairs. So many counterfeit doctrines, which seem to resemble the Gospel in certain particulars, are advocated among mankind, that only those who are most careful and discriminating can distinguish between those doctrines and the Gospel. Every ingenious method of reasoning seems to have been adopted in order to find a foundation for false doctrines, and to frame defenses for them. As a result, the very elect of God seem to be in danger of being deceived by hidden foundations and false structures. As a further result, all Christians should feel the need of studying the Bible, from beginning to end, with the utmost care.

What may we learn by considering the 12th verse and onward to the end of the 20th? The information recorded in these verses suggests Psalm 76:10, for it informs us that evil purposes were turned to good account, at Rome, where Paul seems to have been when he wrote to the Philippian church.

But what may we say of men who would preach the gospel of Christ in order to injure Paul? They suggest the doctrine of total depravity. Satan himself could not have suggested anything more insidious nor more vicious, except as is found in such perversions and mixtures of the Gospel as now exist in modern sectarianism. In sectism exists the consummation of Satan's ingenuity, and human meanness. The modifications of Gospel truth, and the mixtures of human opinions with Gospel truth, which are found in sectism, excel the insidious and vicious disposition of those who preached the gospel of Christ in order to injure Paul.

Would Paul have rejoiced if those who preached the Gospel to injure him had preached a perversion of the Gospel? No. In Galatians 1:6-9 we learn that Paul invoked a curse on any one who would preach a perversion of the gospel of Christ. In view of this we may safely conclude that Paul's example of rejoicing, as here recorded, does not authorize Christians to rejoice in the preaching of any of the modern perversions of the Gospel that are found in religious sectarianism. On the contrary, he authorizes us to

regard such sectarianism as a curse, for its victims are filled with religious conceit which prevents them from loving the Bible and causes them to hate the truth that condemns them, also to hate those who advocate that truth. But do all who become connected with sectarian churches deserve to be called sectarians? No. Some persons are so honest and reverential by nature that they cannot be changed into sectarians.

What is indicated in the 21st verse? The connection in which this verse is found indicates that Paul here meant to say that for him to live in this world would be for Christ to be further made known, but for him to die would be for his own gain. This is intimated in the beginning of the 22nd verse, for the fruit of Paul's labor was to make Christ known and to exemplify his sufferings as well as advocate his doctrine.

Does the 23rd verse indicate that paradise, as an intermediate state for the redeemed, had been abolished? It does not. In 2 Corinthians 12:4 we learn that paradise had not been abolished. Besides, paradise is nearer to the throne where Christ reigns than is the earth, and for Paul to have departed from this earth would have been for him to get nearer to Christ than he could be while in his fleshly body on the earth. Then, in 2 Corinthians 12:2 we learn that paradise is in "the third heaven," and in this we find an intimation of its nearness to the throne where Christ is seated. Finally, if paradise has been abolished, then the redeemed spirits, as soon as they leave their bodies, enter at once upon their final reward. But this is contrary to Revelation 11:18, and to many other scriptures, including Hebrews 11:39, 40.

What may we say of the 27th verse? It is an exhortation which all Christians should consider and conform to in their daily life.

And what of the 28th verse? If Christians were not "terrified" when persecutions unto death were threatened by their enemies, then those enemies inferred that they were so blinded that they should be put to death. One of the complaints which the heathen made concerning primitive Christians was that they were "stubborn." And what is the chief complaint against those who now imitate the primitive Christians? They are charged with "narrowness" and "bigotry," and "stubbornness."

CHAPTER II

What is set forth in this chapter? First, we find all exhortation to the saints at Philippi to be “like-minded” and have “lowliness,” then the highest reason for such an exhortation is declared. This reason was used by Paul for another exhortation which he offered, and then he made mention of Timothy and Epaphroditus, both of whom he commended to the Philippian saints.

What may we say of the exhortation, “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory”? It should be inscribed oil the hearts of all Christians, and should be observed by them at all times for two reasons: First, it is a divine doctrine; second, it is disregarded by all sectarian churches, and Christians cannot afford to be like them in opposition to truth.

What may we say of the 5th verse and onward to the end of the 11th? The Apostle Paul here indicates who and what Christ was before he came to earth, who and what he was while on the earth, also who and what he has been and is since he left the earth. The 6th verse mentions that he was “in the form of God” before he was manifest among men, then the 7th and 8th verses mention his humility while oil earth, while, in the 9th, 10th and 11th verses, we find mention made of his grandeur and glory since he left the presence of mankind oil earth. In view of all that is here revealed concerning Christ, what should be the disposition of all the disobedient of mankind toward him? They should be filled with gratitude toward Him and should joyously confess their faith in him and should obey the Gospel in its fulness with full purpose of heart.

And what should be the disposition of all Christians toward Christ? The 12th, 14th, 15th and 16th verses of this chapter indicate.

Do the 12th and 13th verses contradict each other? No. On the contrary, they are in perfect harmony. The plan of salvation has a divine side and a human side. On the divine side salvation has been provided and offered on certain conditions, and in view of certain promises. The manner in which the divine provision has been made, the conditions on which the divine provision is offered, and the rewards that are offered to those who conform to those conditions, all these are such as should move mankind to accept salvation on those conditions. Thus it is that God “works” in mankind, and especially in Christians “to will and to do of his good pleasure. “ At the same time,

by doing, with diligence, all that the conditions of salvation require, man works out his “own salvation.”

What may we say of the 14th, 15th and 16th verses? The 14th verse gives a command on which the 15th and 16th verses are founded. This means that obedience to the 14th verse is necessary in order that the results mentioned in the 15th and 16th verses may be accomplished. Obedience to the 14th verse is still necessary in order that the divine purpose in establishing the Church may be accomplished.

And what of the 17th and 18th verses? They indicate that Paul so loved the saints at Philippi that he would have rejoiced to suffer martyrdom for them.

What is set forth in the 19th verse and onward to the end of the 23rd verse? In those verses Paul wrote concerning a preacher named Timothy, or “Timotheus,” as his name is here recorded. Paul seemed to regard him very highly, for he said of him, “I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.” The 21st indicates that preachers, at the time that Paul wrote this letter, were very much as many preachers now are—they were disposed to seek their own affairs rather than the affairs of Christ. In 2 Timothy 4:10 Paul made additional mention of such preachers.

What may we learn by considering the 25th verse, and onward to the end of this chapter? We may learn that Paul had confidence also in a preacher named Epaphroditus, whom he sent to the Philippians. What caused Epaphroditus to be sick? In the last verse of this chapter Paul informs us that he became sick to supply unto Paul that which the Philippians should have supplied. This implies that he worked at some secular calling to help to support Paul, and, perhaps, to pay the rent of the “hired house” in which Paul reached in Rome. See Acts 28:30, 31.

In view of this last verse, what may we say of those who declare that Paul did not reproach the church at Philippi for any wrong? Strict accuracy forbids such a declaration. He reproaches that church for its “lack of service toward” him. In other words, though it was a liberal church, yet it neglected Paul at one time or, in course of one period. Do churches of Christ that now exist sometimes neglect preachers? They do, especially do they forget the self-denials that preachers suffer by reason of their absences from their own homes, and more especially that which their families suffer on that account.

The members of the churches, quite generally, “seek their

own,” and, in many instances, fail to consider what is necessary for the preacher's support, especially in view of his absences from his home. As a result, some preachers become discouraged and many of them are hindered in their work. Epaphroditus suffered from a spell of sickness because the saints at Philippi forgot, or, at least neglected Paul's financial needs during a certain period. In chapter 4:10 Paul explained somewhat in their behalf. Preachers sometimes break themselves down in physical health by overwork, made necessary by reason of churches forgetting their needs.

CHAPTER III

What do Bible readers find in this chapter? We find here a continuance of Paul's exhortation in which he warns the Philippian saints against certain evil characters, especially those who would persuade them to adopt Jewish circumcision, and then told of his own relation to the Jewish people, and how he estimated that relation. Next he wrote of his relation to Christ and of his estimate of it, which he followed by a statement of his purposes in regard to the future. In the latter part of this chapter Paul further exhorted the saints at Philippi and warned them against those whom he designated “enemies of the cross of Christ.” The chapter is ended with certain references to Christ, and that which He will do for His people in the resurrection, “according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.”

To whom did Paul refer in the 2nd verse? The 3rd verse indicates that he referred to Judaizers, who were trying to persuade Gentile Christians to adopt Jewish circumcision. The word “dogs” was used with reference to persons who had the disposition of dogs, and the word “concision” means a cutting up or “mutilation.” The Judaizing teachers deserved to be designated as “dogs,” also as “mutilators,” and they were “evil workers” of a dangerous class. See the description of them that Paul gave in Galatians 6:12, 13.

What did Paul mean by the word “circumcision” as used in the 3rd verse? In Romans 2:29 we find the answer to this question, also in Colossians 2:11. All Christians are spiritually circumcised because, by conviction, they are separated from evil conduct.

What estimate did Paul place on his relations to the Jews? He regarded those relations as refuse, when compared with his hope in Christ. And how should Christians regard their

earthward relations when compared with their hope in Christ? They should not regard such relations as worthy of comparison with the glory that Christ offers to them,

Did Paul think that he had already attained to the fulness of perfection? No; but he hoped to attain to it in the resurrection. The meaning of the word “perfect” in the 12th verse is indicated by the use in Hebrews 11:40. The redeemed will all be made perfect at the same time. See I Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

Why, then, did Paul write in the 15th verse as if some had already become “perfect”? The word “perfect,” as here used, refers to advancement in understanding, as may be seen in I Corinthians 2:6. The latter part of this verse shows that the word “perfect” in the first part of it is used in regard to knowledge, or understanding the divine revelation, for Paul here declares, “And if any be otherwise minded God shall reveal even this unto you.”

What may we say of the 17th, 18th and 19th verses? In the 17th Paul exhorted the saints at Philippi to follow him as an exemplar, and to “mark” those who followed him. This suggests the idea that all Christians should follow, or imitate, Paul, and mark all others who imitate him. In the 18th and 19th verses we find mention made of certain professed disciples who were “the enemies of the cross of Christ. “ Are any such characters now connected with the Church? Yes, and they may be known by their disregard for the unity and peace of the churches, as well as by their love of money and their exhibitions of temper.

What of the 20th verse? The Greek word translated “conversation,” in the Common Version of this verse, means “administration of a commonwealth,” and has the force of “citizenship.” That word is translated “citizenship” in several versions of the Sacred Text and may be thus read with confidence. As Christians are members of the kingdom of Christ, who is in heaven, we can readily understand that Paul could declare that “our citizenship is in heaven.”

And what will the Lord Jesus do for us when he will come again? He will “change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” In I Corinthians, 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17, we find more information on this subject. Our fleshly body is designated “vile” because of its earthward inclinations, and by reason of its inferiority to the “glorious” body which will be given to the redeemed when Christ will come again.

CHAPTER IV

What is here set forth for our learning? In this chapter Paul first addressed all the Philippian saints in a very endearing manner, and then made mention of two of them by name, after which he referred to certain women. Next he exhorted all of the saints at Philippi to “rejoice” always, and informed them of those excellencies which they should “think on,” and that they should follow his example. Then he wrote of his own rejoicing because they had again remembered his needs, and stated the fact that he had learned how to be “content” in various conditions, after which he praised those whom he addressed for that which they had formerly done in supporting him while he preached elsewhere. To this he added that he did not write on that subject because he desired “a gift” from them, for he had received their abundance. Next he mentioned what God would do for them, and offered an expression of praise to God, after which he closed the letter with his usual benediction.

Does the 3rd verse indicate that certain women at Philippi were public teachers? No. Women could help Paul in his work, even as women can now help a preacher in his work, without engaging in the actual work of publicly proclaiming the Gospel. A woman, if she knows enough, may assist in teaching a preacher the way of the Lord. See Acts 18:24-26. And there are women now in the Church who know more than certain preachers, and they are capable of teaching them. Besides, they can labor much for the Lord by teaching privately many whom a preacher cannot reach publicly.

Is it possible for Christians to “rejoice” always? Yes, if they will rejoice in the Lord. Earthward conditions may not be favorable, but the Lord is always the same, and if Christians keep themselves always in harmony with the divine will they can certainly “rejoice in the Lord always.” The assurance that we are prepared for death and the Judgment is a reason for constant rejoicing in all those who have such assurance.

What is meant by the word “moderation,” in the 5th verse? The Greek word translated “moderation” in this verse means “reasonableness, equity, gentleness, mildness, lenity, clemency.” The word “gentleness,” or “mildness,” might be well chosen as the correct translation in this instance.

In what sense was the Lord “at hand” when Paul wrote the 5th verse of this chapter? The 139th Psalm indicates that

the Lord is always at hand because He is unlimited in all His powers. But, in James 5:8 we learn that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh,” and in this sense very likely Paul meant that “the Lord is at hand.” See Matthew 3:2 as an illustration of the expression “at hand.”

Did Paul mean, when he wrote the 6th verse of this chapter, that Christians should not be “careful” about anything? No. The translation in the Common Version is not the best. The Greek word here found means, first of all, “to be anxious or solicitous,” and this meaning gives us the right idea. By reason of their confidence in God and Christ all Christians can rejoice at all times, even in the midst of earthward trials. See 1 Peter 1:6, 7. While rejoicing in God and Christ they will not feel so anxious about their earthward affairs as to make them unhappy.

What may we say of the 8th verse? In that verse we find the secret of right conduct mentioned. Actions are the outgrowth of thoughts, and if mankind will think right they will generally act right. Right thoughts produce right emotions, or feelings,, and these result in right decisions or determinations. Finally, right decisions result in right actions. Therefore, all who wish to act aright should, first of all, decide to think aright. Then they will feel aright, decide aright and act aright. All who will obey the 8th verse of this chapter will keep clear of immorality and all other evils . The thoughts of mankind must be purified in order for their lives to be purified, and the only plan by which the thoughts of mankind can be purified is by obedience to the 8th verse of the chapter now under consideration.

What may we say of the 9th verse of this chapter? It indicates that Paul's own words and works were such that he did not hesitate to commend them to those whom he addressed in this letter. If all Christians would do all that Paul's words and works set forth then they would all be faithful to God and Christ. Diligence in obeying Paul's teachings and in following his example would keep Christians so busy that they would not have time nor disposition to think of perverting the truth, nor of disturbing churches by adoption of human devices, nor technical reasonings.

What may we learn by considering the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul rejoiced because the Philippian saints had again become mindful of his needs, yet he wished them to understand that he had learned how to “be content,” even in unfa-

orable circumstances, and could “do all things through Christ,” who strengthened him.

What is indicated by the 15th and 16th verses? The New Testament method of supporting preachers in new fields is here indicated. The saints at Philippi sent to Paul several times when he began to preach in Macedonia. That which was sent to him by those saints Paul mentioned as “giving and receiving.” This implies that Paul was not a hireling, and that the gifts that he received were not wages, nor pay, for his work. The statements which Paul here made in regard to his support in Macedonia show the mistake made in the Common Version of 2 Corinthians 11:8. Paul was not a hireling, and did not take “wages,” but he was a servant of Christ and received “gifts” of his brethren. Besides, he desired fruit that would abound to the account of the brethren who would send gifts unto him. See 17th verse.

But what may we learn in the 18th verse? We may learn that the gifts of temporal things, when bestowed aright, are “well-pleasing to God,” and are to him as the “odor,” or fragrance, “of a sweet smell,” and an “acceptable sacrifice.” Here we find an encouragement and incentive to all Christians to give into the Lord's treasury freely and liberally, every Lord's day. Such giving is not merely a financial obligation, and a solemn duty, but it is an act of worship, for it has a Godward bearing as well as a manward bearing. Therefore it should be engaged in with cheerfulness, gratitude, and joy.

Who were the “saints” of “Caesar's household,” mentioned in the 22nd verse? We are not informed. The name Caesar was the general designation of the emperor of Rome. See Acts 25:10, 11; 26:43. In the absence of all evidence to the contrary we may safely conclude that while Paul was at Rome he had been instrumental in converting some of the emperor's household servants, or that some of them had become Christians before Paul arrived at Rome.

In conclusion, what may we safely state in general concerning the letter to the Philippian saints? It is an affectionate document, with only an intimation of reproof. Paul had suffered much in behalf of the church at Philippi, and those who were members of that church seemed to appreciate him. He received many stripes before he was put in prison at that place, and while a prisoner he preached the Gospel to the jailer and his household. By reason of his sufferings there the members of the church at that place were very dear to him, and he seems to have been very dear to them.

COLOSSIANS

CHAPTER I

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of Paul's thanksgiving and prayer in behalf of the Colossians, and then of the Son of God before He was made known on earth as Jesus the Christ, likewise of the purpose that was intended to be accomplished by His sufferings in the flesh. Next we are informed of Paul's relation to the sufferings of Christ, and of His relations to the doctrine which God intended should be made known to mankind.

What may we learn by considering the fact that Paul gave thanks and prayed for the Colossian saints even as he did for the saints at Philippi? He was deeply concerned with reference to them, and by his thanksgiving and prayers he set an example which all other preachers of Christ, likewise all other Christians, should follow. We should all pray much for ourselves and for the entire Church of God. But can we pray for the Church except we feel deeply interested in it? We cannot. But if we will read the New Testament as we should, and work for the Church as we should, then we shall always feel so deeply interested in the welfare of the Church that we shall be able to pray for it in an acceptable manner.

What may we learn by considering the 9th, 10th and 11th verses of this chapter? We may learn that it was necessary for the saints at Colosse to "be filled with the knowledge" of the divine will in order to "walk worthy of the Lord" and to be "fruitful in every good work;" likewise to be "strengthened with might" according to God's glorious power. From this we may learn that it is necessary for us to study the divine will, as revealed in the Sacred Text, in order that we may be "filled with the knowledge" of the divine will so that in us may be accomplished all the other important ends which Paul prayed for in the Colossian saints.

And what may we say of the 12th and 13th verses? The 12th verse mentions the future prospect of those who are

saints on earth, for it declares that they are made fit “to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Then in the 13th verse we find mention of the change that was made in those saints when they became Christians. In view of that which is here stated, in regard to that change, we can understand that the kingdom of Christ had been established on the earth when Paul wrote the letter we are now considering. If it had not then existed on earth the Colossians to whom Paul wrote could not have been translated into it. Therefore those are wrong who teach that Christ's kingdom has not yet been established on earth.

What may we learn by considering the 14th verse and onward to the end of the 19th? We may learn that Christ, in whom we have redemption, was created by Jehovah in his own image, and before he created any other being, and then that by Him Jehovah brought all else he created into existence. We may learn, likewise, that Christ is the “first born from the dead” to live forever, and that he is the head of the Church. Did Christ exist before the world was created, as he is revealed in the New Testament? No. In John 1:1-14 we learn that He existed as “the Word;” that is, He was a divine being in the image of Jehovah, and was “the Word” of God.

In view of all that we have just learned, what may we say to those who deny that Christ was a created being? They might as well deny any other part of the Sacred Text. See also Revelation 3:14.

What is set forth in the 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses? That God made peace, or made peace possible, through Christ, in order to bring all things in subjection to himself. We find here set forth, likewise, that the Colossians had been reconciled, or brought into peace with God, though they had formerly been enemies in their “minds by wicked works.” Moreover, we find here set forth that this had been done by Christ “in the body of his flesh through death, “ and that the end in view was to present his redeemed ones, “holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight.” But this end was intended to be accomplished by the redeemed ones continuing “in the faith, grounded and settled. “

What is specially revealed in the 21st verse? The fact that “wicked works” make mankind “enemies” to God is here revealed. Can they be saved until their enmity is broken down or destroyed? No; and for this reason the death of Christ on the cross was necessary. The hearts of mankind

must be touched by the sufferings of Christ in their behalf in order for them to become obedient to the Gospel, and then obey it in the right spirit.

Had the Gospel been preached “to every creature which” was “under heaven” at the time Paul wrote to the Colossians, or has it since then been preached to “every creature”? No. The Greek word here translated “creature” means “creation,” the material universe; a created thing, a creature, the human race. The translation here should be “in the whole world.” In other words, the Gospel had then been preached to some part of every nation.

What is revealed in the 24th verse? It reveals that Paul rejoiced in his “sufferings” for the Colossians, and that he wrote of those “sufferings” as something intended to exemplify, in some measure, the sufferings of Christ, which had not been fully exemplified, or shown forth, when Christ was on earth. This is in harmony, with Acts 9:16, also 1 Timothy 1:16. In other words, the time when Christ was on earth was not sufficient, nor appropriate, for Him to show fully all the “sufferings” that needed to be shown in behalf of the Church, and that which was lacking in regard to “suffering,” for the Church, Paul was required to “fill up.” In view of this we may preach Paul's sufferings in addition to Christ's “sufferings” in order to touch the hearts of mankind.

What may we say of the 25th verse and onward to the end of the chapter? In these verses Paul made mention of himself as “a minister, to fulfill the word of God,” and make known “the mystery,” which had “been hid from ages and from generations,” and that this mystery should be Christ in them “the hope of glory.” Paul also made mention of the fact that he preached Christ, “warning every man and teaching every man.”

Should preachers of Christ now warn as well as teach? They should; and if all preachers would warn mankind with all earnestness, against all kinds of sin, the people, generally, would be afraid to trifle with God's word, and afraid to trifle with their own eternal interests. But many preachers have become triflers and do not seem afraid to vary from God's word at any angle, nor in any particular. As a result, the people are not, generally, warned as they should be, and sin prevails.

CHAPTER II

What is here set forth for us to learn? Paul first made mention of his anxiety for the Colossian saints, also for

those at Laodicea, that they might be closely united in love, and then mentioned that he expressed his anxiety because he feared that they might be led astray “with enticing words” or “through philosophy and vain deceit,” and thus be turned from Christ in whom dwells “the fulness of the God-head bodily.” Paul then declares that Christians are complete in Christ, that they are separated from their former life and buried with Christ in baptism. Next we are informed of that which was accomplished through the sufferings of Christ on the cross, after which we find an exhortation against going after Judaism, and then an exhortation against going after that which would be offered by those who would turn from Christ as the head of the Church.

Why was Paul anxious about the saints at Colosse and Laodicea? He knew the common weaknesses of mankind, and, as an inspired man, he knew that Christians would be always in danger of being led astray. The first danger is found in ignorance of the Bible. This results in a feeling of security, and often results in dissensions in the local congregation. Another result is the disposition to listen to “enticing words,” and to those who pretend to understand “philosophy.” The condition of the church at Laodicea, as recorded in Revelation 3:14-18, indicates that Paul was justified in his anxiety concerning it. Besides, the fact that all of the primitive churches went astray, and were lost in the general Apostasy, or falling away from the simplicity of the Gospel, is further evidence that Paul had reason to be anxious about the saints at Colosse and Laodicea, and at all other places.

Are the churches of Christ now in danger, even as the primitive churches were? They certainly are; and they are in danger from a greater variety of false notions than were thrust upon the primitive churches. The Greek and Roman branches of the would-be Catholic church are still in existence with all their pretensions and false reasonings. Then the false reasonings of those branches of ancient sectism have been, in many respects, adopted by all modern religious sects, and, as a result, the religious atmosphere may be designated as hazy with false notions. As a further result, only those who are deeply devoted to Christ, and are entirely satisfied that in God and Christ “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” can remain steadfast in the truth. Moreover, they need to be fully convinced that Christians “are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power,” in order to avoid going

back to Judaism. The three errors which beset the primitive churches, from a doctrinal viewpoint, were Judaism, heathenism and human philosophy. Those errors were, in course of the 2nd Century, combined in the so-called “Neo-Platonic System,” in a “theological seminary” established in Alexandria of Egypt. That seminary has been spoken of as “the grave of primitive Christianity.” The doctrinal corruption and confusion then introduced in course of time resulted in a corruption of life, and made possible the establishment of the Greek and Romish priesthoods. All that those priesthoods have seen fit to do has been done, and all that modern sects have seen fit to do has been done, by way of teaching mankind that they can be saved without obedience to the Gospel in all of its requirements. In view of all this the Holy Spirit directed Paul to write as he did in this chapter. The importance of this chapter, in its present application, may be understood by all disciples of Christ who will consider the disposition of many professed disciples to go after “philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ,” as manifested by their disposition to adopt the follies of the so-called “higher criticism,” likewise the follies of “centralization of power” and of church federation.

Of what is such a disposition the outgrowth? It is the outgrowth of ignoring the chapter we are now considering, and especially the 10th verse of this chapter.

When is the 11th verse accomplished in mankind? When they believe in Christ wholeheartedly, repent of their sins and confess their faith in Christ, then they are cut off from “the sins of the flesh” by ceasing the practice of those sins, and thus are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands.

When is the 12th verse accomplished in those who obey Christ? It is accomplished when, by the authority of Christ, they are immersed in water into the name of the Godhead and are raised out of the water to walk “in newness of life.”

What is the bearing or application of the 13th verse? In this verse Paul mentioned the condition of the saints at Colosse before they had obeyed Christ, and then mentioned the change which had been wrought in them and for them by Christ when they obeyed Him.

What may we say of the 14th and 15th verses? Paul set forth in the 14th verse the fact that Christ, by his death, made an end of Jewish sacrifices. Then in the 15th verse

Paul referred to the fact that by his death for mankind Christ implied that all else that had been done for them was not sufficient to save them and that all heathenism was a failure in regard to salvation. See Philippians 3:8. Besides, his death was followed by his resurrection from the dead, and by his resurrection he accomplished that which is stated in 2 Timothy 1:10 and ill Hebrews 2:14, 15.

What may we say of the 16th and 17th verses? In the 16th is an exhortation against going back to Judaism, and ill the 17th is the basis of that exhortation, when considered as something that was fulfilled ill the Gospel. See Hebrews 10:1. These scriptures should be sufficient warning, in regard to the Jewish laws, to prevent all Bible readers from contending for the Jewish sabbath, or any other ordinance of that law, as necessary to be observed by Christians. See Romans 10:4.

What is referred to in the 18th and 19th verses? A clear reference is here made to the “voluntary humility” which is manifest in the fasts and penances imposed by Romanism, likewise to the fasts, and kneeling at mourners' benches, which are taught by certain Protestant sects, as a matter of their own volition or will, and not by divine authority. Then, in the 19th verse we find reference to the result of the Apostasy, or that departure from the Gospel which accepted a man as head of the church instead of Christ.

What may we learn by considering the 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter? We may learn in them that Paul inquired why Christians, who were dead to elementary teachings, such as were found in the Jewish law, would accept and become “subject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men.” In other words, as they had been freed from God's ordinances, as found in the Jewish law, because they were not necessary for Christians to observe, Paul inquired why they would place themselves ill subjection to religious ordinances of men. To this Paul added that such ordinances “have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility and neglecting of the body,” as may be seen in Rome's fasts and penances. Such ordinances have not even this to recommend them that they satisfy the flesh, nor avoid the causes of temptation.

In view of all this, why have professed Christians gone after such ordinances? Conceit, ignorance, irreverence, and then more conceit—these are the evils which have made apostasy from the truth revealed in the Bible possible among mankind. These evils were the secret of the origin of heathen-

ism (Romans 1:21-25), and these evils have been the secret of all religious sectism, both ancient and modern in so-called Christendom.

CHAPTER III

What is set forth for Bible readers in this chapter? We are first informed of that which all Christians should do, by reason of the fact that they have been raised with Christ, and “have put off the old man with his deeds,” or have refused to follow their earthward inclinations in opposition to the Gospel. Near the end of this chapter we find special instructions to husbands, to wives, to children, and to fathers, also to servants. The chapter is ended with the declaration that God is not a respecter of persons.

Did Paul have any doubt whether the Colossian saints had been raised with Christ? The 12th verse of the preceding chapter indicates that he had not. Why then did he use the word “if” in the beginning of this chapter? He used that word even as the Savior did in John 10:37, 38. Christ did not doubt his relationship to the Father, but spoke as he did in the mentioned verses for the sake of emphasis. Paul did not doubt that the Colossian saints had really been buried with Christ and raised with him, yet he wrote as he did in the 1st verse of this chapter in order to impress as much as possible the commands he intended to give.

Are any of the commands given in this chapter applicable to those who have not died to sin, and been buried with Christ and raised again? No. Neither are any other of the commands found in the letters to Christians applicable to those who have not been buried with Christ in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life. Nor are any of the promises recorded in these letters applicable to those who have not been buried with Christ and raised again. All applications of any part of the epistolary writings of the New Testament to those who have not obeyed Christ in water baptism, so that they have been buried and raised with him in that institution, are misapplications of those writings. This being true, we can understand that those who endeavor to console themselves, and others, by the use of any part of the epistolary writings, while they have not been immersed in the name of the Godhead, are perverters of truth, however good their intentions may be.

Does the 2nd verse of this chapter mean that Christians should not love any earthly object? No. The 19th verse shows to the contrary. But the things of this world, all of

which are to perish, are not objects on which Christians should set their affections. For instance, they should not love money.

In what sense are Christians “dead” while they are alive on the earth? The answer to this question is found in Romans 6:11. When mankind cease the practice of sin they are dead to its actualities, or from a life in sin, but not until they have obeyed Christ in baptism are they made free from the guilt of sin. See Romans 6:17, 18.

In what sense is the life of the Christian hid with Christ in God? In 2 Corinthians 5:17 we find the answer to this inquiry. Christians are in spirit under a new Master, and are in new relations. They have new hopes, new joys, new comforts, new consolations, all of which are hid from the world. In this sense their life is “hid with Christ in God.”

What is meant by the first word of the 5th verse of this chapter? The Greek word with which that verse begins means “to put to death, to kill;” then “to deaden, mortify, to render impotent. “ In view of such meanings, or shades of meaning, of the word here referred to, we may safely conclude that the command here given means that Christians should render impotent, or powerless, their earthward passions. This does not imply that they should expect to get rid of them entirely, but should do as Paul said he did. See 1 Corinthians 9:27.

What may we say of “the old man,” and “the new man,” as mentioned in the 9th and 10th verses? The first part of the 8th chapter of Romans informs us on this subject. Those who are not Christians obey the suggestions of the flesh, while those who are Christians obey Christ as set forth in the teachings of the Holy Spirit as given in the written word of the New Covenant Scriptures, and in so doing control the flesh. See 1 Corinthians 9:27. The “flesh” is “the old man,” or old Adam, while Christ is “the new man,” or second Adam, whom Christians put on in baptism. See Galatians 3:27. When obedient believers put Christ on in baptism they show that they are “renewed in knowledge.” See also Titus 3:5. The change accomplished when persons become Christians is so great that it is expressed by the words “quickenened,” or made alive, “renewed” and “created.” Not only so, but the change accomplished in becoming a Christian is divinely required to be continued and intensified throughout life. That change is such that it disregards the differences which nature and circumstances have made among mankind, as is indicated in the 11th verse of this chapter.

What may we learn by considering the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the Holy Spirit through Paul exhorted the saints at Colosse to do that which would keep them united always, and always in peace. The Greek word translated “bowels,” in the 12th verse, as found in the Common Version means “the chief intestines, viscera; the entrails, bowels; the heart, the affections of the heart, the tender affections.” In view of these several shades of meaning we may read “tender affections of mercies. “ Skeptical physicians sometimes ridicule the idea that the bowels are, in any respects, related to the emotions, but in expressing such ridicule they show their ignorance of man's organization. They might as well ridicule the fact that intense sorrow or even intense fear, will, if protracted, cause the hair of a human being to turn gray prematurely. The word of God is always right, and mankind are wrong in proportion as they differ from it.

What use may we safely make of the 16th verse of this chapter? We may use it to show the Holy Spirit's teaching in regard to the song service of the New Testament Church and in opposition to the use of instrumental music in worship. This verse commands “teaching and admonishing, in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs,” and in order thus to teach and admonish certainly the sentiment set forth must be understood. But the use of instrumental music always interferes with distinct hearing and understanding the sentiment that is sung. Such music is therefore opposed to “teaching and admonishing” in the song service of the Church.

What is indicated in the 17th verse? The indication here is that all approaches to God should be made in the name of Christ, and thus that the prayer recorded in the 6th chapter of Matthew is not appropriate for those who live under the fulness of the Gospel Age. The name of Christ is not mentioned in that prayer. In John 16:24 we learn that while Christ was among mankind in person his disciples did not pray to the Father in his name, but the 23rd verse of that same chapter informs us that, at a later date, they should begin to pray in his name. Then in the verse now before us the indication is that all approaches to the Father should be made in the name of Christ. Do Christians sometimes forget this? They do. Even preachers sometimes offer a public prayer, or thanksgiving, without making mention of the name of Christ. This indicates inexcusable ignorance of The divine teaching on this subject.

What do we find in the 18th and 19th verses? Instructions

are here given to wives and husbands in their relations to each other. Why are wives commanded to be in subjection to their own husbands, and why are husbands commanded to love their wives? The Holy Spirit knew the chief weakness of both. He knew that The wife is, in many instances, disposed to listen to some one else, rather than to her own husband, even as Eve did, and that the husband, in many instances, is liable to grow cold in his love for his wife. That is to say, the wife often becomes rebellious and the husband often becomes indifferent, and then, perhaps, bitter. Then domestic bliss is at an end and domestic misery is introduced. All this may be avoided by obedience to the instructions here given. But husbands and wives who profess to be Christians often fail to read these instructions, and, as a result, fail to consider them. As a further result, they become bitter instead of blessed, in their relations to each other.

And what is set forth in the 20th and 21st verses? Instructions to children and fathers are here set forth. Are children and fathers in need of instruction in regard to their relations to each other? They certainly are, for children are often disposed to be rebellious, while fathers are often disposed to correct them only when in anger and thereby “provoke” them so that they become “discouraged.” But all this may be avoided by obedience to the instructions here given.

And what else do we find in this chapter? We find instructions to servants in relation to their masters, and such instructions as will enable them to glorify God even while living as servants. The Lord intended that his word should make mankind better in all of life's relations, than they would otherwise be. And this would be the result if they would only read the word of God and apply it to themselves. But mankind seem disposed to read and study anything and everything rather than the Bible, and, as a result, their ignorance of the Bible is, with few exceptions, dense and shocking. As a further result they flounder and plunge forward in life and are seldom benefitted by the teaching set forth in the Bible, except at a remote angle.

CHAPTER IV

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Information is here given of the duties of masters to servants, and then an exhortation to prayer, watchfulness and thanksgiving, is recorded, likewise an exhortation to saints with reference

to conduct and speech before the world, in order that they may know how “to answer every man.” Then we find mention made of two brethren whom Paul intended to send unto the church at Colosse. Paul next made mention of several other brethren, whom he commended. Near the end of this chapter Paul made mention of the church at Laodicea, and of the epistle he had written to it; also gave direction concerning that epistle, and concerning the one he was then writing to the church at Colosse.

What effect will the 1st verse of this chapter have on all masters if they will observe it? They will fear to mistreat a servant.

What may we learn by considering the 2nd and 3rd verses? We may learn that Christians should be very prayerful and be full of thanksgiving. But what is the tendency of this age? To do but little praying, or giving of thanks, is the tendency. Besides, very few are as watchful as they should be in regard to their conduct.

What is meant by the expression “open unto us a door of utterance,” as recorded in the 3rd verse? In 1 Corinthians 16:9 and 2 Corinthians 2:12 we learn that Paul referred to an opportunity to preach the Gospel to the people. He is supposed to have been in Rome when he wrote this letter, and, if this supposition be correct, he desired the Colossian saints to pray that he might have an opportunity to preach to the people of Rome.

How can Christians “walk in wisdom toward them that are without”? In I Peter 2:12 we find an indication on this subject. Christians should be careful in all their dealings with their fellow mortals, in order that the name of Christ may be glorified. Even when we exercise the greatest care we may be misunderstood and reproached. Therefore we should do our best to be understood and to avoid reproach, in our dealings. Sometimes people of the world or some sectarians will deal with us in order to get an opportunity to reproach us. On this account a certain cautious brother would not recommend anything that he had for sale, but required every one who dealt with him to act strictly on his own judgment. That is the only safe plan for disciples of Christ who are often despised because of their religion.

How can speech be “seasoned with salt”? By being guarded with saving, or modifying, clauses it may be said to be seasoned with salt, because salt is a saving power, or commodity. Besides, in Leviticus 2:13 we learn that salt was

required to be used with all the offerings made to God under the Jewish law. In view of this the Savior spoke as he did with reference to salt in Mark 9:49, 50, and Paul, in the chapter before us, wrote, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Finally, salt is a fire-extinguisher, even as water is. Therefore, in order to save the alien sinner from fire he needs to pass through the water, and in order to save the Christian from fire he needs to let his speech be "seasoned with salt," at all times. Whether this was any part of the divine intention in commanding water baptism in the sinners' obedience, or referring to salt in the saints' obedience, we can not affirm with certainty; yet we can see the appropriateness of such command, and reference, even from a human viewpoint.

What use may we make of the 16th verse? We may use it to show that reading of the epistles in the public assembly is right. This suggests that good readers should be developed in every congregation, and reading of the Sacred Text with reverence should be a part of the service in every religious meeting.

What may we say of the letter to the Colossians as a document? It is not strictly argumentative, but is intensely instructive and sets forth truth which, if observed by the New Testament Church, would have saved it from apostasy. In this letter the Holy Spirit seemed to have in view the admixtures of doctrine which would be made, especially in the 2nd Century, and which would be the desire of conceited specimens in the Church in all ages. "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools" was true of mankind soon after the flood, and has been true of them ever since.

1st THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER I

Of what are Bible readers informed in the 1st chapter of the letter now before us? We are informed that Paul addressed the church at Thessalonica, and united two other preachers with him in that which he wrote to that church, also that his letter was kind and comforting, as is indicated in the chapter now under consideration.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses? They indicate that the church at Thessalonica was in good condition. That church was commended by Paul for its “work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.” In that respect it was a model for all other churches of Christ. Many churches receive the Gospel and never seem disposed to do anything except as they are urged along by some preacher. They apologize for their indolence by saying, “We haven't any preacher.” But the Thessalonian saints did better than that.

What may we say of the 3rd verse? In that verse Paul makes mention of the “election” of those saints whom he addressed. All Christians are “chosen” to salvation, being “called” by the gospel of Christ. (2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14.) Then, when they obey Christ they become members of his Church, and, as he is the “elect” of God, they are the “elect” people. (1 Peter 1:2; 2:6.) Thus we learn that the election of God's people is in Christ, and is accomplished by obedience to him. The idea that God elected certain men and angels to be saved without regard to obedience is an error, which has resulted from a failure, on the part of those guilty of it, to discriminate between official character and personal character. God has chosen men to official character before they were born, and even from the foundation of the world. (See Jeremiah 1:5; Ephesians 1:4.) But such choice of men does not assure them of salvation. Paul was a “chosen vessel” of the Lord, officially, yet was in danger of being lost, personally. See Acts 9:15; 1 Corinthians 9:27.

What of the 5th, 6th and 7th verses, when taken together? We may learn from them that Paul set a good example before the brethren at Thessalonica, also that they followed it, and thus became “ensamples” to all believers “in Macedonia and Achaia.” The 8th and 9th verses indicate that the example to which Paul referred was specially in regard to the fact that the Thessalonians had “sounded out the word of the Lord. “

What may we say of the example as here mentioned? It indicates what a church can do when it is deeply in earnest. If the example of the church in Thessalonica would be followed by all churches of Christ that are now in existence their number would be doubled every few years, if not every year. But, as a rule, churches regard themselves as helpless if they cannot get a preacher. Then when they do get one their own indifferent example will likely defeat all the truth he can preach. The church in Thessalonica “sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia,” but in other places their faith was “spread abroad. “

Had those Thessalonians been idolaters? Yes; but they had “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.” In this they differ from many who now profess to be Christians. Paul declares in Colossians 3:5 that covetousness is idolatry, and, in view of this, we may safely say that many who now profess to be Christians are idolaters. They are full of covetousness, and love this world more than they love God and Christ. As a result they are idolaters, but do not suspect it, and will not believe it when told of it. They have not “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.” On the contrary, they are like the Jews mentioned in Ezekiel, 14th chapter, who had “set up their idols in their hearts.” All such will learn, when too late to repent, that their mistake will be fatal.

CHAPTER II

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Information is here given that Paul was bold in making known “the gospel of God,” at Thessalonica, though he had been “shamefully entreated” at Philippi. This is followed by Paul's declaration that he spoke “not as pleasing men, but God,” and, as a result, he did not use “flattering words” nor seek “glory” of men, nor was he “burdensome” unto them, but was “gentle” among them. He then explained what he meant and stated how he had “behaved” himself among

them. Next he mentioned his thankfulness because they had received his preaching not as the word of man, “but as it is in truth the word of God.” He then referred to the churches in Judea and to their sufferings of the Jews, also to that which those he addressed had suffered of their own “countrymen.” The perverseness of the Jews is next stated, also Paul’s desire to go to the Thessalonians, and that they were his “glory and joy.”

Where do we read of the treatment that Paul received at Philippi? We read of it in Acts 16th chapter.

What is meant by the expression “with much contention,” as recorded in the last part of the second verse of this chapter? Its meaning is indicated by the 3rd verse of the Epistle of Jude. Besides, in Acts 17:1-9 we may learn more on that subject. Paul’s efforts to establish the Gospel at Thessalonica were with “much contention,” in that he “contended earnestly” for the Gospel, so earnestly that he brought persecution on himself.

What may we say of the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th verses? In them Paul informs us that his behavior and preaching at Thessalonica were such as became an honorable man. He was true to his trust, and did not deceive any one, nor flatter any one, nor seek glory of men. This indicates that he set an example there which, if followed by all preachers and elders, would have made the apostasy, which resulted in establishing Roman and Greek Catholicisms, impossible. Moreover, that example would have made the falling away, which resulted in the apostasy of disciples in the 19th Century, likewise impossible. The example mentioned in these verses has been ignored by Protestant preachers, generally, as well as by Romish priests. But those preachers, who have professed to be disciples of Christ, and have ignored that example, are the most inexcusable of all preachers.

What of the 7th, 8th and 9th verses? In them a part of Paul’s example is set in regard to manual labor, which uninspired men cannot follow very closely without being hindered in their work of preaching. Paul did not need to read and study as uninspired men need to do. Therefore, he could work with his hands to the extent that he had physical health to do so, and yet be an effective preacher.

But preachers who are not gifted by the Holy Spirit as Paul was should give much time to study if they would learn the truth and preach it aright. Yet they can all imitate Paul in being fair and honest, avoiding the use of “flattering words,” and refusing to seek “glory” of men. They

can likewise imitate Paul in living a blameless life in the midst of their brethren and before the world.

What of the 13th and 14th verses? In them is indicated that the Thessalonians, who had become Christians, were a reverent people. They received the Gospel “as the word of God,” and not as the word of men. They did not try to besmirch it by acting the part of critics in regard to it, but with reverence received it, and in diligence obeyed it, regardless of that which they suffered from their own countrymen on that account.

What may we say of Paul's remarks concerning the Jews as recorded in the 15th and 16th verses? In those remarks we find a terrible description of their perverseness, which indicates that they were afflicted with a judgment of blindness which had been brought upon them because of their disobedience. See Matthew 13 - 14, 15.

In the last part of this chapter we find a statement that Paul desired to see the Thessalonian brethren, but that he had been hindered by Satan; also that they were his “glory and joy.” How could Satan hinder Paul from going to Thessalonica? He could do so, even as he hinders preachers of Christ now from going from one place to another. The evil work that Satan is suffered to do in one congregation where a preacher is laboring may require him to remain there so long that he is hindered from going to another.

CHAPTER III

What is indicated in this chapter? Paul's anxiety for the church in Thessalonica is here indicated, and mention is then made of his joy and thanksgiving when he learned of the welfare of that church. The chapter is ended with Paul's account of his prayer in behalf of the members of that church.

What may we say of Paul's anxiety in behalf of the saints at Thessalonica? It shows that he loved them intensely. He had suffered much in his efforts to establish the church there, and, as a natural result, that church was specially dear to him. Besides, Paul was anxious concerning the saints at all places, because he knew the value of their souls better than they did themselves. At the same time he knew that he could not enable them to understand the dangers to which they were exposed. The same is now true of those preachers and elders, and others, who know enough

to understand the dangers to which churches, generally, are exposed.

But is any one now connected with the church at any place who prays night and day “exceedingly” in behalf of the saints? Perhaps not; yet Paul's example should not be ignored. Christ is the perfect exemplar, and he prayed much. Paul is the perfect imitator, and he prayed much. Paul wrote to the Corinthians that they should be “followers “ of him as he was of Christ. 1, Corinthians 11:1). This means that they should imitate him as he imitated Christ. In praying much, as well as in all other acts of worship, we should imitate Paul. Then we should imitate him in regard to diligence in all good works. This will require a reformation, if not a revolution, in the feelings of many who profess to be Christians, but who, in reality, are mere formalists. A majority of us are not very prayerful, nor thankful. We do not hold close communion with God every day, and some of us never hold such communion with him. We are cold-hearted, or, at least, are “lukewarm,” and, thus, are disgusting to our Savior. (See Revelation 3:14-16.) In view of this, we should all repent of our lukewarmness, and endeavor to be wholehearted Christians.

What was the burden of Paul's prayer for those whom he addressed in this letter? He prayed that he might see their face and perfect that which was lacking in their faith, as is mentioned in the 10th verse. Then he prayed that the Lord might direct his way unto them, and make them “increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men.” Do Christians now need such a prayer in their behalf? Yes, we all need to “increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men.” For “love worketh no ill.” (Romans 13:10.) The end which Paul had in view, in praying for his brethren at Thessalonica, was that they might be established “unblameable in holiness.” This is the end that should be accomplished in all Christians. But in the falling away from the Gospel in its simplicity and its fulness the religious leaders disregarded much of the authority of Christ, and assumed much authority that He did not authorize. Thus they continued till the pope of Rome was established with all of his assumed authority. In the 16th Century Protestant reformers rejected Rome's assumed authority, but did not fully accept the authority of Christ. As a result they trifled with Christ's authority, and their followers, generally, have been religious triflers.

CHAPTER IV

What do we find in this chapter? We find an exhortation that the Thessalonians should “abound more and more” as they had been taught, followed by the statement that it was the will of God that they should be sanctified, and should not defraud one another. Then we find the statement that God had not called them “unto uncleanness, but unto holiness,” and that those who despised their brethren despised God. “Brotherly love” is next mentioned, and, after commending those he addressed for that which they had shown of brotherly love, Paul exhorted them to increase in it “more and more.” Quietness, attention to their own business, working with their own hands, and walking honestly toward those that were without, we find next mentioned. Then we find words of information concerning those who are asleep in death, and the chapter is ended with an exhortation that the Thessalonian brethren should comfort one another with those words.

What is indicated by the last of the 1st verse of this chapter? The indication is that Paul desired those whom he addressed to “abound more and more” in the good that they had begun to do in obeying that which he had commanded them. The 12th verse of the preceding chapter bears in the same direction, so does the 10th verse of this chapter. Paul was not satisfied with a slight, or moderate, obedience, on their part, to the divine commands, but desired that they should obey them wholeheartedly. This indicates that the same is required of us.

What is meant by the word “sanctification,” as found in the 3rd and 4th verses? The Greek word here translated by the word “sanctification” also means “moral purity, sanctity” and is from another Greek word which means “to separate, consecrate, cleanse, purify, sanctify, regard or reverence as holy.” In view of this we should not attach to this word any mysterious meaning, nor suppose that it can only be fulfilled by some mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit. The word “sanctification,” as found in the 3rd verse, is explained by the words, “that you should abstain from fornication.” Then the 4th and 5th verses are to the same effect, and simply refer to the moral purity, or chasteness, of the body. Adultery, sodomy, emasturbation—these are the evils that are specially ruled out by the word “sanctification,” as here used. The 6th and 7th verses bear in the same direction, as is indicated by the word “uncleanness,” as used in the 7th verse. Then

the 8th verse shows that whoever despises his brother despises God. This is in harmony with Matthew 25:40, and 1 Corinthians 8:12. In view of this, those who are innovators among disciples of Christ are certainly in a dangerous, and, even, condemnable position. They show by their conduct that they misuse, mistreat, and even despise, those disciples who oppose their devices. As a result, they despise God and Christ.

Had the Thessalonian saints shown “brotherly love” for other saints? The 9th and 10th verses so indicate, but Paul desired that they should “increase more and more” in such love, and that they should be well behaved in other respects. Is it important for professed Christians to walk “honestly toward them that are without”? Yes. Because of dishonesty on the part of professed Christians the preaching of the Gospel is often counteracted. One dishonest man connected with a church can annul most of the preaching that can be done in the community where he is known. In view of this, all disciples of Christ, especially, should be very careful about their debts, and do their best to avoid a misunderstanding in business affairs, and all other affairs. Some enemies of the church seem disposed to try to have a misunderstanding with disciples so as to reproach them. Therefore Christians should be always on their guard.

Of what are we informed in the 12th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? Information is here given concerning those who will have fallen asleep in Christ, and those also who will be alive in Christ and dwelling in the flesh, when he will come again. Those saints who will be alive in the flesh when Christ will come again will not go into heaven before those who will then be numbered with the dead saints. But the dead saints will be raised first; and then the living saints will be given immortal bodies without suffering death, and the two classes of saints will all be “caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” In that event will be accomplished “the first resurrection” mentioned in Revelation 20:5, 6. Then will be fulfilled the promise of the Savior as recorded in John 14:3. Finally, at the end of the millennial age, Christ will come again, according to Jude 14th and 15th verses.

CHAPTER V

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Information is here given that the Lord will come unexpectedly, even “as

thief in the night, “to those who will not be looking for him, also that the saints are not in darkness, so that the day of the Lord should thus “overtake” them. We are next informed that Paul addressed the saints at Thessalonica as “children of light,” and “children of the day,” and on the basis of their condition as “children of light” he exhorted them to personal faithfulness, also in regard to their duty toward others. Near the end of the chapter we find a record of a prayer that Paul offered for them, also a charge in regard to the reading of this letter, and then the chapter is ended with the benediction that is generally found at the end of Paul's epistles.

What illustration does Paul here make use of in order to indicate the suddenness of the Lord's appearing when he shall come to gather his faithful ones to himself? He refers to the coming of a thief and to the coming of travail, or birth-pains, upon a woman with child, when the time comes for her to be delivered of it. The indication here is that when Christ will come to receive his saints he will then end the day of probation, or trial, or opportunity, for salvation, with all the wicked who will then have heard the Gospel without obeying it. This is intimated, at least, by the words “and they shall not escape,” as recorded in the close of the 5th verse.

What of the 7th verse? Before strong drink began to be distilled, men who drank intoxicants had fermented drinks only, and by them they did not generally become drunk before night, even if they began to drink of them in the daytime. But an hour, or less time, is sufficient to make a man drunk on distilled drinks, and especially on such drinks as are made by certain combinations of drugs.

What of the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th verses? In the 8th verse Paul set forth an exhortation in regard to “the breastplate of faith and love,” and “the hope of salvation” for a “helmet,” or covering, for the head. In thus writing Paul had reference to the defensive armor of an ancient soldier. In the 9th and 10th verses Paul mentioned the reason for thus exhorting. In the 11th verse is an exhortation in regard to comfort and edification.

What of the 12th and 13th verses? In them we find an exhortation in regard to the estimate which the saints in Thessalonica should place on those who labored among them, and were over them, in the Lord, and admonished them. In the 14th verse, and onward to the end of the 22nd, we find a series of exhortations, which must be obeyed by all

who would make sure of God's approval in the last day.

Is it possible to “pray without ceasing”? Yes, as Paul obeyed this scripture, so may we obey it. He did not remain on his knees all the time, nor were his thoughts fixed on the throne of God all the time. Yet he did not pass over one day without praying, and, in that sense, he prayed “with out ceasing. “ We may obey this command even as we may obey the one preceding it. In the midst of life's affairs we cannot be rejoicing every moment of life. Yet we can keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and, thus, keep ourselves in condition to rejoice so that, whenever our thoughts turn heavenward, we can rejoice. Moreover, by holding close communion with God and Christ in reading the Bible daily, also in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, we can rejoice every day, and thus “rejoice evermore.”

What is the bearing of the 19th verse? When special gifts were bestowed, its bearing was that those who possessed them should not suppress them. In view of this, Paul wrote to Timothy two commands on this subject. See I Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6. But to us, who have not any special gifts, the bearing of this command is that we shall not quench the good impulses which the Holy Spirit produces in us when we read its words, and meditate on them.

But what of the 20th verse? In course of the period when special gifts were bestowed on Christians, some had the gift of prophecy. See Acts 11:27, 28; 21:4. But Paul declared that the bestowment of that gift, and others, should cease. (1 Corinthians 13:8.) Since they have ceased, all prophesyings have been mere guessings, and, therefore, unreliable. Those who have pretended to be prophets, since the gift of prophecy has ceased, are false prophets and are like those mentioned in Jeremiah 23:21-32.

What of the 21st verse? In it Paul commanded those he addressed to prove, or test, all things, and hold fast that which is good. This command applies to all Christians. We need to test all doctrines and practices, by the divine word, and reject all that are not good, holding fast to those that are good. On the same principle we need to test all professed preachers and private teachers of religion. We must “try the spirits.” (See I John 4:1.) In I Peter 4:11 we find the principle on which we must try them. If they do not speak as the oracles of God speak, or as the written word declares, we should not trust them.

What may we say of the 22nd verse? In it we find a command, which is intended by the Holy Spirit to keep Chris-

tians clear of much behavior that is not specially condemned, and yet is dangerous to reputation, if not to character. In many instances young persons, and even older ones, are not able to see any harm in going to certain places, or keeping certain company, or using certain forms of expression. But if they will remember that they are commanded to “abstain from all appearance of evil,” they will understand that things do not need to be harmful, or evil, in themselves in order to be unlawful for Christians. Therefore, whether Christians can see any harm in going to see a dance, a horse-race, a theatrical performance, or in drinking a glass of wine, or beer, or ale, yet they must admit that to do so certainly has an “appearance of evil.” This being true, Christians should abstain from them. If they will not do so, they should be admonished. Then, if they will not heed the admonition given, they should be entreated. If they persist in doing that which has the ‘appearance of evil,’ they certainly deserve to be publicly rebuked. If this fails to accomplish the end in view, they should be withdrawn from as persons who walk “disorderly.” (See 2 Thessalonians 3:6.) All that has been said about conduct is true of speech. All vulgar speeches, and profane words, even if repeated as the words of others, have the appearance of evil, especially when uttered by Christians. The command in Ephesians 4:29 is without modification. On the witness stand, in court, we may be compelled to pronounce vulgar and profane speech, but we should not be guilty of anything of that kind by our own choice.

What may we learn by considering the 23rd verse? In this verse we find man spoken of as consisting of three parts, namely, “spirit and soul and body.” The “spirit” means the mind, or spirit-being that God forms within man when he first breathes the breath of life. God gave man his spirit when he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and made him a living being (See Genesis 2:7; Zechariah 12:1.) Because of this, God is spoken of as “the Father of Spirits.” (See Hebrews 12:9.) The word “soul” is here used in the sense of animal life, though, in some instances, it is used in the sense “spirit.” (See 1 Peter 1:9.) Paul's desire, for the saints he addressed, was that their “whole spirit, and soul, and body,” should be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This indicates that all Christians should endeavor to keep themselves unspotted from the world. The 24th verse, if properly considered, will give us consolation in regard to the Lord's help in our

efforts to keep ourselves “blameless,” and thus “unspotted from the world.”

What of the 25th verse? It indicates that Paul felt the need of the prayers of his brethren, and implies that all preachers now need the prayers of all Christians, even as they need the prayers of the preachers, and of each other.

What may we say of the application of the 26th verse? It is applicable to the extent that the social custom of greeting with a kiss prevails, and not any farther. This command was not intended to create the custom, but simply to regulate Christians in regard to it. The same is true of the command, “honor the king,” as recorded in I Peter 2:17. This command was not intended to make any man a king, nor in any respect bring a king into existence but it was intended to regulate Christians in regard to respecting him when they would live in a country ruled by a king.

What of the 27th verse? It shows that Paul desired the church at Thessalonica to have a Bible reading, and the same was true of his desire for the Church at other places. (See Colossians 4:16) This shows that the churches of Christ should now have Bible readings.

What may we say of the entire letter that we have just considered? It is heart-winning in spirit, and rich in teaching. The New Covenant Scriptures would not be complete without it. As the church in Thessalonica had not adopted any heresies, and was not troubled with Judaizing teachers, Paul did not need to reason with it in a severe manner, as he did in his letter to the Romans, and that to the Galatians. In this letter he wrote to those who were “ensamples,” and except the intimation, in chapter 3:10, that their faith was not “perfect,” there is scarcely a word of reproof. But how many churches now are in such condition? How many individual Christians are doing their whole duty? Reader, how are you living? What may be said of your “work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope”? Remember that you will have but one time on earth to serve the, Lord. Make good use of it.

2nd THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER I

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter? We may learn that Paul mentioned Sylvanus and Timothy in connection with himself in the beginning of the letter that we now commence to consider. We may learn also that the church he addressed in this letter had increased in faith, likewise in charity, and that Paul gloried by reason of the “patience and faith” which it manifested in the midst of “persecutions and tribulations.” Next we learn that he wrote to that church of the “righteous judgment of God,” which Christ will inflict on the wicked when he will come “in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus. Christ.” The chapter is ended with a record of a prayer that Paul was accustomed to offer for those to whom he wrote at Thessalonica.

What may we say of the 3rd and 4th verses of this chapter? They are refreshing in the assurances they offer concerning the church at Thessalonica. Paul declared, “Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.” This was high praise. How many churches now deserve it! But this was not all. The next verse informs us that Paul gloried in the church at Thessalonica for its “patience and faith” in the midst of “persecutions and tribulations.” How many churches now exist that have such faith, and charity, and patience, that Paul could glory in them if he could appear among them in person?

What of the 5th verse? In it Paul declares that the fact that the believers he addressed endured “Persecutions and tribulations” with “patience and faith” was a “manifest token” or sign, that God would in righteousness count them worthy of the kingdom of God for which they suffered. In Hebrews 6:10 we are informed that God is “not unrighteous,” and, therefore, he will not forget the good deeds of his people. In view of this, we can understand that the patience and faith of the Thessalonians will not be

forgotten, especially as the Lord has ordained that “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” See Acts 14:22. His righteousness requires that he shall save those who patiently endure trials for his sake.

What may we learn by considering the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th verses of this chapter? In them we learn of God's righteousness toward the disobedient. The Lord will take “vengeance” on them, and they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power. The expression, “know not God,” as recorded in the 8th verse, may be understood by considering 1 John 2:3, 4.

What may we say to those who teach that all mankind will be eternally saved, and those who teach that all who have been elected from the foundation of the world will be eternally saved, and to those who teach that all good people will be saved, regardless of obedience to the Gospel? We may say to them that Paul teaches a contrary doctrine, and we may with confidence refer to the 7th, 8th and 9th verses of this chapter for evidence.

When will the everlasting destruction here referred to be inflicted on the disobedient?. When Christ will come to be “ glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe. “ This implies that he will not come for that purpose till all who can be made obedient believers will have been led to believe. That time will not be till the end of the millennial age, of which we read in the last part of Revelation 20th chapter. In the close of the Gospel Age Christ will come to gather those to himself who will have been faithful through the Patriarchal, the Jewish and the Gospel dispensations of religion. They will have part in the first resurrection. What may we say to those who declare that Christ will not come again till at the end of the Millennial Age? We may say, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.” All such, by implication, deny that the resurrection mentioned in I Corinthians 15:12-54, and in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, means “the first resurrection,” mentioned in Revelation 20:5,6; this involves them in hopeless confusion, and fatal error. Neither in I Corinthians, 15th chapter, nor in 1 Thessaloinans, 4th chapter, do we find the sentence against the wicked set forth, but only the resurrection of the righteous dead, and the changing of the righteous living, do we find there mentioned. The same is true of Revelation 20:5, 6. Then when John declares, in contradistinction from the righteous dead, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until

the thousand years were finished,” the testimony on this subject is complete. Then when we read Revelation 20:12, 13, we should feel overwhelmed with testimony. Bible readers should always consider 1 Peter 4:11, and never bend nor twist scripture to suit their theories. They ought not to have any religious theories.

What may we say of Paul's prayer, as recorded in the 11th and 12th verses of this chapter? It is an index to the kind of prayers that all preachers, with all others, should offer for all obedient believers.

CHAPTER II

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Information is here given concerning the great apostasy, or falling away, from the Gospel, which the Lord foresaw would result from the outworking of human conceit in men who would be connected with the Church. We are informed, likewise, of the overthrow of the apostasy, by the brightness of the Lord's coming, after which we find a description of the Satanic character of the apostasy, and of the condemnation of those who would become partakers of that character. In the last part of this chapter we find comforting words for the church at Thessalonica, and, thus, for all other faithful ones.

What may we say of the first part of this chapter? In the 1st, 2nd and 3rd verses of it Paul endeavored to prevent those he addressed from supposing that Christ would come soon, and assured them that he would not come until after “a falling away” from the faith and a revealing should be made of one whom he wrote of as “that man of sin, “ ”the son of perdition.” The apostle then gave a further description of the character of that wicked one who should be revealed, which is sufficient to show that he referred to the most pretentious churchman that could arise. When we come to look for that churchman, we find him in the pope of Rome.

What may we say of the 6th and 7th verses? In the 6th verse Paul refers to the hindrances which God would use to prevent an early development of the pretentious character to whom he referred. Then, in the 7th verse, he declared, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.” In other words, the iniquity, which would finally develop the mentioned wicked character, had commenced to work in Paul's day, but would be hindered for a time, and, as the 8th verse sets forth, “Then shall the wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and

shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” Then, in the 9th verse, we are informed that the coming of that wicked one is “after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” Here is a further index to the pope of Rome, for the greatest “lying wonder” of this age is the pretension, on the part of the pope and those who have his supposed “official grace,” that they can change real bread into the real flesh of Christ, and real wine into the real blood of Christ. Another of their “lying wonders” is the pretension that they can change common water into so-called “holy water.”

What is meant by the 7th verse? The word “let” is there used in the sense of hinder. Pagan Rome hindered the rising of papal, or Catholic, Rome, and had to fall before Catholic Rome could arise.

What may we say of the 10th, 11th and 12th verses? The former part of the 10th verse refers to those whom the Holy Spirit foresaw would “perish” because they would be brought under the influence of “the son of perdition.” In the latter part of it, and onward to the end of the 12th verse, Paul declares the reason that they would be brought under that influence. In that which Paul here declares, he sets forth the secret of the apostasy that began to show itself while the Apostles were still on earth in person. That secret is here declared to be human perverseness and a divine judgment of blindness. The human perverseness here referred to is expressed in these words: “Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.” Then the divine judgment of blindness is expressed thus: “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” Finally, the end which God had in view when he inflicted that judgment is set forth after this manner: “That they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” In Romans 1:18-31 we read of the secret of heathen blindness. In Matthew 13:14, 15, and in John 12:37-41, we read of the secret of Jewish blindness. Then, in the lesson before us, we read of the secret of Roman Catholic blindness, and of the blindness of those Protestants who copy after Rome in either doctrine or practice. God does not propose to be trifled with, indefinitely. He is not a man that we may dispute with him. “Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” (Romans 9:20.) This question indicates that God does not intend to allow man to dispute with him. And whenever mankind have become sufficiently Satanic to dispute with God, he has, in his right-

eous indignation, in due time, sent upon them a judgment of blindness. Thus it has been with the heathen; thus it has been with the Jew; thus it has been with the Catholic, whether Greek or Roman. Thus it seems to be with sectarians of Protestantism. Many of them have opposed the truth, when it has been offered to them, and after opposing it for a time they have seemed to be given over to hardness of heart, and perverseness of spirit, so that they will reach after and adopt any kind of a falsehood in order to break the force of truth. They act as if God had sent upon them “strong delusion that they should believe a lie.”

What may we learn by considering the 13th and 14th verses? We may learn of Paul's thanksgiving for the Thessalonian saints, and the reason for his thanksgiving in their behalf. God has chosen all the redeemed ones to salvation by the same process, namely, “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” This is explained in the 14th verse by the declaration, “Whereunto he called you by our gospel.” In other words, the Lord called them by the Gospel to the belief of the truth, and sanctification of the Spirit. In Acts 18:8 we learn how this was accomplished at Corinth, and this indicates how it was accomplished at Thessalonica. See also Acts 17:1-4. The Thessalonians, like all others, needed to hear the truth before they could believe it, and they needed to believe it before they could be sanctified by it, or by the Spirit through which it was given. On the question of sanctification, we should read John 17:17.

What do we find in the 15th, 16th and 17th verses of this chapter? In the 15th verse we find an exhortation to the saints here addressed to stand fast in the teaching they had received whether by word or by Paul's letter. In the 16th and 17th verses we find a record of a prayer of Paul for the Thessalonian brethren. This prayer, with the preceding exhortation, is appropriate for all obedient believers. All need to be exhorted to steadfastness in the divine word, and all need the prayer that God will comfort and establish them “in every good word and work.” Christians do not, generally, exhort each other, nor pray for each other, as much as the Lord has indicated in his word.

CHAPTER III

Of what are we informed in this chapter, the last of Paul's writings to the Thessalonians? We are informed that Paul had sufficient confidence in those he addressed in this letter

to ask them to pray for him, and he mentioned the special end which he wished them to have in view in their prayers. Next we are informed that he gave to them an assurance with reference to the Lord's faithfulness, and their willingness. This is followed by a record of a brief prayer that Paul offered for them, and a command that he gave to them in regard to disorderly persons who professed to be brethren. He then referred to their knowledge of his own example among them, that he might not be "chargeable" to any of them, though he had "power" to do otherwise. After expressing himself thus he referred to that which he had said to them on this subject, and mentioned the reason he referred to it. Then he commanded and exhorted the disorderly ones, also the brethren that were engaged in "well doing." This is followed by certain commands in regard to any one who would not obey the words of Paul in this letter.' The chapter is ended with a few words of prayer, followed by Paul's mention of his "salutation," or greeting, which, in this instance, was his benediction.

What may we learn by considering the request that Paul made of the brethren he addressed in this chapter in regard to prayer? We may learn that churches of Christ should pray for preachers of the gospel of Christ, and that their prayer should be like that which Paul requested his Thessalonian brethren to make for him. We may not understand how God is going to arrange that his word shall "have free course and be glorified," nor how he will deliver his preachers from "unreasonable and wicked men"; yet he knows how he can arrange to accomplish those ends, and that is sufficient for all the faithful. Abraham did not understand why God required him to leave the land of the Chaldees, and go into a strange country, yet he was sure that God knew, and that was sufficient for him. The same will be true of us if we are children of Abraham by faith.

What may we say of the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses? The assurance that the Lord is faithful, as set forth in the 3rd verse, means that he is constant, and, thus, is always the same. See James 1:17; also Hebrews 13:8. This is a basis, or reason, for strong consolation. Then the assurance, expressed in the 4th verse, that Paul had concerning the Thessalonian saints was that they were doing, and would do, that which he had commanded them. This is appropriately followed by a prayer that the Lord would direct the hearts of those saints "into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

What did Paul mean by the word "disorderly" in the 6th

verse of this chapter? That which is set forth in the next verse, and onward to the end of the 12th verse, indicates that he meant idleness, or laziness, in regard to working for a living. The Greek word here translated by the word “disorderly” is from a word which was applied to soldiers who deserted their ranks, and in a general way it means “to neglect one’s duty.” The special sense, in which those to whom Paul referred as disorderly, was in regard to idleness, if we may judge by the next verse and several others. But do not those neglect their duty who stay away from the meetings of the church, especially the Lord’s day meeting—the meeting for the fullness of the worship? They certainly do, and are like soldiers who do not answer to the “roll call,” and are not in position when they are needed. In a spiritual sense they are “disorderly.” They do not need to be guilty of any crime, nor immorality, of any sort. All they need to do is to neglect their duty, and the character expressed by the word “disorderly” begins to be established. If they persist in such neglect of duty they may be justly charged with being disorderly, and should be dealt with accordingly. Yet great care should be exercised with reference to persons who cannot come to meeting themselves, and have not any one to bring them. There are many women, and old people, who are in this condition. Then there are some who are deaf, and to whom all public gatherings are an annoyance because they cannot hear. Yet deafness may not justify any one in staying away from the Lord’s table. These, however, should be dealt with very tenderly, as their absence from meeting may not be wilful. But those who can come, yet do not, may be safely regarded as out of order, or “disorderly,” and, if they cannot be reformed they should be withdrawn from publicly. But before such withdrawal the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter should be exhausted on such persons. That is to say, those who are faithful should not associate with any one who is disorderly, or remains away from meeting wilfully. If they visit that one it should be in order to lead him to repentance. He should not be treated as an enemy, but admonished as a brother. All that can be done should certainly be done to save the wanderer, remembering James 5:19 ‘ 20. The parable of the lost sheep, as recorded in Luke, 15th chapter, is an indication of the value of a wandering brother or sister. In view of this the elders, deacons and all other members of the church should do all they can, according to scripture, to save wanderers. But if all efforts fail, and they cannot be saved, then they should be with

drawn from publicly in order to save the church from their evil influence. Their names should be mentioned before the congregation, and the question should be asked, "What saith the scripture?" This question is found in Galatians 4:30, in regard to casting out the bond-woman, and is always appropriate. Then the verse under consideration should be read, and, 'in order that all may be satisfied, the question should be asked, Does any one know any scriptural reason why we should not proceed according to this scripture? If a scriptural reason is not offered, then the fellowship of the church should be declared withdrawn from the one whose case is under consideration. The authority for public exercise of discipline is found in 1 Corinthians, 5th chapter.

But should public discipline be exercised on the Lord's day? Churches must decide this for themselves. The exercise of discipline and worshiping in spirit and in truth are not in harmony with each other as far as human feeling is concerned. To discuss the question of erecting a meeting house, for instance, might stir some feeling which is not in harmony with the spirit of worship. The same is true of the exercise of public discipline. In view of this churches will, generally, find that they should appoint a special meeting for the exercise of church discipline, especially if anything resembling a trial is needed. Then, if a case is tried on the occasion of a special meeting, it may be finally disposed of at such a meeting, and only the result be stated on the Lord's day. In many instances, even that much should be avoided on the Lord's day, for some persons are so sensitive that every remark on such a subject is liable to interfere with their enjoyment of the worship, and their recollection of its blessedness. For the same reason all severe criticisms, and everything resembling a controversy, should be avoided on the Lord's day. If some one has said that which another thinks is an error, the best plan, generally, is to call attention to it, and state that we should all consider it with care before accepting it. Then, in private, the one who was guilty of the supposed error should be approached, and, if possible, convinced, so that he may make his own correction at a future date.

What may we say of Paul's example among the Thessalonians? It was the best. In order to condemn idleness by his example he worked for his own support when he might have demanded a support of them. For example's sake he toiled, and while his physical nature was clamoring for rest he often preached, and exhorted and prayed in their hearing.

He thereby did his part, and did it well. if any of the churches there did not appreciate his labors, the fault was with them. When, in course of time, the entire church forgot him, and went astray, he could not avoid it. He had done his duty, even his whole duty. He had not shunned to declare all the counsel of God, even as was true of him at Ephesus, and elsewhere, and had set the right example in all other respects. See Acts 20:17-35.

In conclusion, we may state concerning the letter just considered that it is a very appropriate addition to the letter it follows. In the first chapter is set forth a severe sentence against all who do not obey the Gospel. In the 2nd chapter is a severe sentence against all who do not receive the love of the truth. In the last chapter instructions are offered concerning those who walk disorderly. The first of these sentences is that which the Lord will finally inflict on the finally disobedient ones; the second is that which he will inflict on the perverse ones even while they are here in the flesh; the last of these sentences is that which obedient Christians should inflict on triflers in order that they may be ashamed, may repent, and, thus, may be finally saved. All Christians who study this letter with care, and accept it, will be enriched in thought, filled with godly fear, and with a loving disposition toward their brethren.

1st TIMOTHY

CHAPTER I

Unto what are we here introduced? We find in this chapter an introduction to Paul's writings to a young preacher named Timothy. And of what are we informed in this chapter? Information is here offered concerning the apostleship of Paul, the relationship of Timothy to him, the reason he besought Timothy to abide in Ephesus, followed by an explanation of that reason. This is followed by information concerning "the end" which the Lord had in view when he gave His commandment, and that some had swerved from it. Then "the law" is mentioned, also the lawful use of it. Next we find mention of the Gospel and Paul's thankfulness that he was put into the Gospel ministry. To this is added a statement concerning his character as a persecutor of the Church, and the reasons he obtained mercy. In this connection mention is made of a certain "faithful saying," and an address is made unto God. The chapter is ended with a statement of a certain charge to Timothy, and of certain men who had deviated from that charge, and of that which Paul had done to them.

What may we learn by considering the 1st and 2nd verses of the chapter before us? We may learn that Paul was an apostle "by the commandment" of God, and of Christ, also that Timothy was Paul's "own son in the faith." This implies that Paul was not an apostle by his own choice, also that Timothy was led to become a Christian by Paul's teaching.

Were any persons in Macedonia in danger of turning aside from the divine doctrine they had received? Yes, and the same is true now of a majority of believers. Many persons are restless. If they would study the Bible till they could understand it, they would be satisfied. But their impulse and passion, especially their conceit, will not suffer them to study the Bible till they can understand it. On the contrary, their conceit impels them to presume that they know enough to become teachers, but understand "neither what they say nor whereof they affirm." All such are a damage to any

church with which they are connected, or that will suffer them to occupy the position of teachers.

What is the force of the 5th verse of this chapter? It mentions the purpose which Christ had in view when he gave each and all of the Gospel commands. Those commands were given to be obeyed, but this is not all. They were intended to accomplish certain ends in all to whom they are addressed. One end is charity, or love, “out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned,” or faith that is genuine, and not a mere pretense. Suppose obedience is rendered which does not accomplish that end? Then it is empty and vain. See 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. All who have obeyed, but not with such submission of spirit that “the end of the commandment,” as here mentioned, is accomplished in them, will be a burden to the church by reason of their indifference, or a damage by reason of their presumption.

What “law” is referred to in the 7th, 8th and 9th verses? The expression “the law” generally, if not always, refers to the Jewish law. But how can Christians use the Jewish law “lawfully”? They can do so by referring to it as the Apostles did after the Holy Spirit came upon them. See Romans 7:1-4; 1 Corinthians 9:9, 10. But all who now refer to the Jewish law for illustration, as Paul did in the scriptures just referred to, should consider Romans 10:4, and thereby learn that the Jewish law is not any part of the Gospel, but has, according to Hebrews 10:1, “a shadow of good things to come.”

Who are they that now make an unlawful use of the Jewish law? All make such use of it who, appeal to it for authority, whether in regard to a priesthood, or clergy, as a separate class of teachers, or in regard to priestly robes, or infant church membership, or musical instruments in worship. All such use it unlawfully, and, of them all, the statement may be truly made that they do not understand “what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” They do not observe Romans 10:4, and are in confusion concerning Christ's authority. As a result they are in confusion concerning both the Jewish law and the Gospel.

What may we learn by considering the 13th and 14th verses? We may learn that Paul was a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious, while he “lived in all good conscience before God.” See Acts 23:1. This indicates that conscience is not a guide, but is determined by convictions. Therefore, the Jew has a Jew's conscience, and the Mohammedan has a

Mohammedan's conscience. The same is true of a Roman Catholic, a Greek Catholic and of every kind of Protestant. If the teaching that has been received by a person is right, the conscience of that person will be right, but if the teaching has been wrong, then the conscience will be wrong. Paul had received the wrong teaching of the Jews, who had made wrong interpretations of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and, as a result, his conscience was wrong. The same is true of all who have made a wrong use of the law, because they have not observed Romans 10:4, nor considered Hebrews 10:1. But as Paul obtained mercy because "ignorantly and in unbelief" he did wrong, so we may hope that those will obtain mercy who now persecute the Church of God "ignorantly and in unbelief," that is, when they will repent and obey Christ in baptism as Paul did. See Acts 22:16. This is indicated in the 14th verse, which declares that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. "

But did not Paul mention another reason why he obtained mercy? He did, as we learn in the 16th verse of this chapter. The Lord intended to "show forth all long suffering" in Paul, "for a pattern" to those who would after him believe on Christ "to life everlasting." He intended to make Paul the first "pattern" among his followers in regard to "all long suffering." Stephen was the first martyr for Christ, but he did not suffer long, and Christ chose Paul as the first one in whom to "show forth all long suffering."

What may we say of the 15th verse? We find in that verse a statement of Christ's purpose in coming to this world, and of the fact that Paul, while persecuting the Church of Christ, was "chief " among sinners. What should we say to those who dwell on the expression "of whom I am chief," and declare that Paul meant he was the chief of sinners even after he had become an apostle? We should say to them that Paul was the chief of actual sinners before he became a Christian, and then the chief of saved sinners after he became a Christian. This is all that Paul's history sets forth, and the historic limitations, in this instance, must be accepted as sufficient to determine the exact meaning of the expression under consideration. Paul, as an apostle, was the chief of saved sinners.

What may we say of the 17th verse? It is an appropriate expression of adoration from Paul after he had made mention of God's purpose in calling him to the "ministry" of the Gospel, and in making him a "pattern" to those who should after him be led to believe "to everlasting life."

What may we learn by considering the “charge” which is set forth in the 18th and 19th verses, also the information given in the 20th verse? We may learn that certain “prophecies went before” in Timothy. What those prophecies were we are not informed, though mention is again made of them in chapter 4:14. Yet the bearing of those prophecies was that he might by them “war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience.” We may learn also, by considering the 19th and 20th verses, that some had “made shipwreck” “concerning faith,” of whom were certain men named “Hymemeus and Alexander.” Then we may learn that Paul had delivered such to Satan that they might “learn not to blaspheme.” The idea in the expression, “delivered unto Satan,” we first find in 1 Corinthians 5:5, where it is used with reference to church discipline. Paul commanded the saints at Corinth, with reference to a certain fornicator, “to deliver such an one unto Satan,” and here Paul declares that he had “delivered” certain men “unto Satan.” In each instance this expression referred to declare non-fellowship, in order that the offender might be led to repent.

CHAPTER II

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are first informed of Paul's exhortation that Christians should approach God in behalf of “all men,” and special mention is made of those who are “in authority.” This is followed by the statement that the end to be accomplished is for the benefit of Christians in this life, and to do that which is acceptable to God who desires the salvation of all mankind. Mention is then made of “one God” and “one mediator,” and of what that mediator did in behalf of mankind. Next we find that Paul made mention of himself as an apostle to teach the Gentiles. Finally, we read of Paul's desire in regard to men who are Christians praying everywhere, and then we read of that which he set before Timothy in regard to women who are Christians, and certain restrictions which should be placed on women in regard to teaching and exercising authority, with mention of certain reasons for those restrictions.

What relation exists between Christians praying for “all that are in authority,” and Christians leading “a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty”? The relation is this: In answer to the prayers of Christians God will overrule those who are in civil authority so that they

will rule righteously, and, as a result, Christians will be protected in their rights. Besides, in answer to the prayers of his people God will so lead mankind in his gracious providence that they will become acquainted with the truth and be saved. The churches of Christ are, generally, indifferent to their duty in regard to this question. Many of the sects have substituted prayer for certain acts of obedience, and, in certain other respects, have misused prayer, to such an extent that many disciples have failed to make the proper use of prayer.

What may we say of the 4th verse. It should be considered in connection with chapter 4:10, also 2 Peter 3:9. All will be saved from the grave. (I Corinthians 15:22,23.) But he will save eternally only the obedient. See Hebrews 5:8, 9.

What may we learn by considering the 5th and 6th verses? We may learn that Christ is the "one mediator between God and man," and, thus, He is the mutual friend between God and man. On the one side He could speak of God as his Father, and on the other he could speak of man as his brother. While he was careful concerning the honor of God, yet he was well acquainted with the frailties of mankind. The word mediator means midway-man, or middle-person, who comes in between persons at variance to bring them into oneness. Christ was fitted for that position by his two-fold relationship, and, in order to satisfy the offended justice that was against man, he "gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time."

What should we say to those who declare that all men should pray, regardless of their character, and refer to the 8th verse of this chapter as evidence in favor of their declaration? We should say to them that the expression, "lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting," clearly shows that Paul referred to men who are Christians when he wrote, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere." Wicked men cannot lift up "holy hands without wrath and doubting.

What may we learn from Paul's directions concerning the apparel of women who are Christians? We may learn that they are required to be modest in dress, and not that they should be odd, nor peculiar, likewise that they should not adorn themselves with that which is costly or attractive. See I Peter 3:3, 4. For further information in regard to the ancient method of adorning, on the part of women, see Isaiah 3:16-23. Paul wrote in opposition to such adorning

as was customary in the century to which he belonged. What is meant by “braided hair”? The Greek word here translated “braided” means anything “plaited or intertwined,” and a reference was made by that word to plaiting the hair, which was then regarded as immodest. The custom then was to wear the hair hanging loose over the face, and shoulders. In that sense a woman's hair was her veil, and covering. But for a woman to wear her hair after that manner now would have an appearance of evil, and Paul says: “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” (I Thessalonians 5:22). This forbids women to wear their hair in that manner now, at least in those countries in which the custom is for respectable women to wear it otherwise. Customs change, and that which is regarded as becoming in one age, or country, is often regarded as unbecoming in another. For instance, aged women and bishops are commanded not to be “given to much wine,” nor “given to wine.” (Titus 1:7; 2:3.) This implies that they might drink wine, and drink it daily as a beverage, but restricted them only in regard to the amount they would drink. But now a bishop of a church of Christ who would drink wine daily, especially as a beverage, would fall under reproach. Why? The custom in regard to wine, and all other kinds of strong drink, has changed, and, as a result, the common sentiment has changed, at least, in many countries. Since distilled drinks began to be made drunkenness has become such an evil that the command, “Abstain from all appearance of evil,” requires total abstinence from strong drink, except when it is used for medicine. But all this is here stated in order to show that women are not bound, in regard to dress, by any ancient custom, but are simply required to “adorn themselves in modest apparel,” physically, and “with good works” spiritually. See also 1 Peter 3:4. But all this refers to women who are wives, and not to virgins nor widows who are spoken of by different words in Greek as well as in English. “Parthenos” is the Greek word for virgin, and is applicable to a man who is unmarried and is chaste. “Gune” is the Greek word for wife, and “Xera” is the word for widow.

What may we learn by considering Paul's instruction concerning the silence of women in the congregation? We may learn, first of all, that he certainly had reference to wives, for he referred to Eve who had a husband, and he referred to “child bearing,” which pertains only to married women. In view of this the question of woman's silence in the churches is simplified. The silence enjoined only re-

fers to women who have husbands, and with reference to them only in regard to teaching and exercising authority. All that pertains strictly to the worship they are privileged to engage in, and, therefore, may sing and pray, and even read the Bible without comment. But in regard to teaching in the public congregation, and exercising rulership, they are restricted. The reason for such restriction is mentioned in the 14th verse. Man was first formed, and for that reason should be first as a teacher and ruler. Besides, woman is, generally, more impulsive than man, and, as a result, is more easily flattered than man generally is. As a further result, she is more easily deceived than man is. Our mother Eve was flattered by Satan when he spoke to her by a serpent, and for this reason her daughters, in their married relation, are restricted in regard to public work in the church, and are required to be in subjection to their own husbands. Virgins, who are members of the church, are to be regulated by their fathers, if they have fathers living, or by the church through its elders, even as other members are regulated. For special instruction concerning widows see the 5th chapter of this letter.

What is the application of Paul's statement in the last verse concerning the wife, that "she shall be saved in child bearing?" The last part of that verse shows that Paul did not mean that child bearing would save a wife, either physically or spiritually, if she does not maintain the character of a Christian. On the contrary, it implies that such character is necessary in order that the salvation here referred to may be assured, for Paul mentions, as a condition of that salvation, "if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." But is the salvation here referred to temporal or spiritual? In Genesis 35:18 we learn that Jacob's beloved wife died in the time of child birth, and from that time till the present a woman has, occasionally, died in child birth. Besides, the last part of the verse under consideration intimates that the word "saved," as here recorded, does not refer to temporal salvation, for the bearing of that word is made to depend on the character of a Christian afterwards, as well as before child bearing. What then is the force of the declaration, "She shall be saved in child bearing"? One of the shades of meaning of the word here translated "saved" is "to be in the way of salvation," and that shade of meaning is applicable when that word is followed by a condition, as in I Corinthians 15:2. In that scripture we may read thus: By which you are in the way of salvation if you keep in memory

what I preached unto you. This seems to be the idea in the verse under consideration, and we may read it thus: “Notwithstanding she shall be in the way of salvation in child bearing, if they continue in faith, charity and holiness with sobriety.” That is to say, though the wife is restricted in regard to public teaching, and exercising authority, yet she is in the way of salvation in another department of life. Her husband, as a Christian, is in the way of salvation in public teaching and regulating, while she is in the way of salvation in child bearing, and continuing “in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”

What should we say of the idea that the words “child bearing,” in this connection, refer to the birth of our Savior? It is a speculation, and cannot be entertained by those who obey 1 Peter 4:11.

CHAPTER III

What is set forth in this chapter for our learning? First, we find instructions with reference to a bishop, and then with reference to deacons, accompanied by instruction concerning the wives of deacons. Then we find a statement of Paul's reason for writing to Timothy on these subjects as well as those mentioned in the preceding chapters. The chapter is ended with a declaration in regard to “the mystery of godliness.”

Were the bishops of the New Testament churches different from those who were designated elders and overseers in those churches? No 1 In Acts 20:17 we are informed that Paul sent for “the elders of the church” at Ephesus, and in the 28th verse of that chapter we learn that those elders were addressed as “overseers.” Then we find by examining the Greek word there translated by the English word “overseers,” that it is the same that is here translated by the word “bishop,” or “bishops,” in Philippians 1:1.

May a man who is a Christian justly “ desire the office of a bishop”? The first verse of this chapter indicates that he may, and it informs us that, in so doing, he “ desires a good work. “

What may we say of the qualifications here mentioned for the bishop's work? He is required to have a “blameless” character, and fifteen specifications are here mentioned as necessary to make up a “blameless” character. These specifications should be mentioned in order.

1. He “must be . . . the husband of one wife.” This needs to be carefully considered because some infer that the man

chosen for a bishop does not need to be a married man but if he is married he must not have more than one wife' Others have inferred that he must have one wife, yet needs not to be restricted to one, but may have several wives. Both of these inferences are vain speculations that result from technical reasoning, or are the foundation of such reasoning, and are intended to justify an error. "A bishop, then, must be . . . the husband of one wife"—and but one. If his wife dies, he is at liberty to marry again, but in so doing he should remember the 7th verse, and not regard himself at liberty to marry any kind of a woman. Those who hold that the man chosen for a bishop does not need to be a married man omit this first specification of a blameless man, and presume to be wise above what is written. The married man is supposed to be settled in life, and this is one condition of the "blameless" character which a bishop must have. If his wife dies, and that unsettles him, so that he loses his sobriety and good behavior, he is unfit for the office of a bishop, and should resign, or ask to be relieved of the active duties of an elder, because he lacks some of the qualifications of a "blameless" character. But if he remains settled and maintains sobriety, and good behavior, he should not be discarded because he has met with the misfortune of losing his wife.

2. A bishop "must be . . . vigilant." This means that he must "take heed" to himself and to "the flock" (Acts 20:28), and "watch" for the souls of the flock as one who must give account to the chief Shepherd. See Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

3. A bishop "must be . . . sober." The Greek word here translated by the word "sober" means "of a sound mind, sane, staid, temperate, discreet." From these shades of meaning we learn that a bishop must not only be free from drunkenness, as is elsewhere indicated, but free from levity, and all other foolishness.

4. He "must be . . . of good behavior." In other words, he must have common sense enough to behave himself discreetly.

5. He "must be . . . given to hospitality." This means that he must not be a selfish specimen who is not willing to take a person to his home, nor take care of any one in his home, except his own family.

6. A bishop "must be . . . apt to teach." This means that he must be capable of teaching persons in the Bible. But as this qualification of a bishop does not state that he must be apt to teach publicly, we should not strain it to mean

publicly, so that a good private teacher could not be a bishop, even if he could not teach publicly. Some men are good public teachers, while others are good teachers in private only. The best teacher in a congregation is not always a public speaker. Yet he may be able to instruct all the public speakers connected with the congregation in which he holds membership. Such a man should not be regarded as disqualified for the eldership because he can not be a public speaker.

7. A bishop “must be . . . not given to wine.” This meant, when it was written by Paul to Timothy, that a bishop must not drink wine to excess, and it now means that a bishop must not drink any wine as a beverage. He cannot “abstain from all appearance of evil,” and drink wine, as a beverage, even in small quantities.

8. A bishop must not be a “striker.” That is to say, he must not use his fist on any one, nor be, in any respect, a violent man.

9. Then a bishop must not be “greedy of filthy lucre.” In other words, he must not be greedy to get rich.

10. But he “must be . . . patient.” This means that he must be a man of self-control, or one who knows how to wait without 'fretting.

11. Besides, he must not be a “brawler,” or one who quarrels with his neighbors about religion, nor even anything else.

12. He must not be “covetous”—must not desire more than his share of anything, but must be satisfied with that which is right.

13. He must be “one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.” This does not mean, as some suppose, that his children must all be members of the Church, for Paul said to Titus, “having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly.” That is to say, the bishop's children must be well-behaved. He may teach them aright, but whether they will become members of the Church or not must always be left to them. A Jew could say, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15.) But the Christian can only say, As for me, I will serve the Lord. He cannot speak for any one else. Is it necessary for a bishop to have children of his own body begotten? No. The question before the apostle was rulership, and not progeny. In view of this, a man can show rulership by controlling step-children, or the child or children of any one else, or his own family that may not have any children in it. The reference here made

to children is only incidental. Yet disorderly children are an evident negative disqualification for either the eldership or deaconship.

14. A bishop must not be “a novice,” or new convert, “lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” This implies that the devil fell from his first condition, and became the devil, by reason of lifting himself up with pride.

15. Finally, a bishop “must have a good report of them that are without.” That is, he must be correct in his business, and social, and political, relations.

What may we say of the qualifications for deacons, as they are here mentioned? The deacons must also be “blameless.” The chief difference between them and the bishops is that they are not required to be “apt to teach.” As a result, they may be chosen from among younger converts than the bishops.

What is meant by the word “proved,” as recorded in the 10th verse? The Greek word here translated “proved” means “to test, try, examine, scrutinize.” In view of these shades of meaning, we can understand that those who are chosen for deacons should be scrutinized in regard to their qualifications, and, in that sense, should be tried. They may be also tried, or tested, by being appointed, or requested to act, in a deacon's place occasionally.

What of the qualifications of the wives of deacons? They are only such as every married woman should have, and they are good traits for all other women. For instance, every woman should avoid being a slanderer. The Greek word here translated “slanderer” is the word from which we have in English the word “diabolical.” It means “a calumniator, a treacherous informer, traitor,” and is one of the names of the devil.

What may we say of the wives of bishops? Though their traits are not mentioned, yet they ought to be as good as the wives of deacons. As bishops and deacons are both to be “blameless,” so should the wives of both be “grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.”

What may we learn by considering the 15th verse? We may learn by that verse in regard to the New Testament Church, as “the house of God.” The tabernacle and temple of the Jewish Age were each designated “the house of the Lord,” and “the house of God.” See Judges 18:31; 20:18, 26; 2 Chronicles 5:14. But in the Gospel Age the Church, which consists of living men and women who are obedient to Christ,

is designated “the house of God.” It is also spoken of as “a habitation of God” (Ephesians 2:22), and “the temple of God.” 1, Corinthians 3:16.) We may also learn by considering the verse now before us that the Church is declared to be “the pillar and ground of the truth,” and thus is the support of the truth. In other words, the Church of God, wherever it exists, is intended, by its Founder, to be the institution to uphold the truth, and he never ordained any other institution for that purpose.

What may we say of the last verse of this chapter? The Greek word translated “without controversy” in the Common Version of this text means “confessedly, avowedly,” and thus means “evidently.” The idea here is, that without any question, or dispute, the mystery of godliness is great, in that divinity was manifest in a human body, was justified, or declared to be just In, or by, the Spirit, when the Holy Spirit came upon Christ at his baptism. Then he was “seen of angels” “both before and after his death preached unto the Gentiles, when his Gospel was made known to them, “believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

CHAPTER IV

What is here set forth for Bible readers? A declaration of that which the Holy Spirit expressly says concerning a departure from the faith “in the latter times,” and what those who would be guilty of such departure would do. This is followed by information concerning the privilege of Christians to eat of all kinds of meats if they will receive them with thanksgiving. Then we learn that Paul informed Timothy in regard to being “a good minister of Jesus Christ” — what to do and what to refuse. Next we are informed in regard to the value of “bodily exercise,” and of “godliness.” The remainder of the chapter sets forth instruction for Timothy as a specially-gifted preacher.

Have we any evidence that “the latter times,” mentioned in the 1st verse of this chapter, have come? Yes. There are two great churches which forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth. Those churches are the Roman Catholic and the Greek Catholic churches. The Latin church is chief in fulfilling that which the Spirit here declares. That church forbids its public servants to marry, and forbids the eating of meat on certain days. The Greek church follows the example of

the Latin church in some measure. Then the Second Ad. vent church, in most, if not all, of its branches, forbids the use of swine flesh, and some of that church forbid the Use of all meats, though they were “created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth,” for they are declared to be “good,” and are not to be “refused” if “sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”

If a preacher would now be “a good minister of Jesus Christ,” must he not obey Paul's commands to Timothy in regard to that which he should do, and should refuse? Yes. But what is the difference between the “profane and old wives' fables” of Paul's time on earth, and the fables of heathen mythology now? There is not any difference worth speaking of, and Paul's directions to Timothy indicate that preachers of Christ must keep their preaching clear of heathen mythology, or the stories of the imaginary gods of the heathen.

What may we say of the 8th verse? In that verse we are informed that “bodily exercise” is of little profit compared with exercise in godliness. The former is of profit only for a short time, while godliness will be profitable for this life and that which is to come.

And what of the 10th verse? In it we are informed that Paul labored, and suffered reproach, because he trusted in the living God. Then we are informed that God is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe. In what sense is God the Savior of all men? He is the Savior of all mankind in that he has, through Christ, made an atonement for all, and thus has satisfied the offended justice that was against all. Besides, he has arranged, through Christ, that all shall be raised from the dead. See John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:22. In these respects salvation is universal. But in Hebrews 5:8, 9 we learn that “eternal salvation” is offered to those who believe and obey Christ. This scripture should be read in connection with chapter 2:4, also 2 Peter 3:9.

How could Timothy prevent people from despising him? By being “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” May young preachers now prevent people from despising their youth, by observing the instructions which Paul gave to Timothy in the text now under consideration? They may. And if they observe those instructions fully they will treat the sisters of all classes with dignity, and will not annoy them by familiarity in the kitchen, nor anywhere else. Neither will

they try to show how much they know about making up beds, sweeping floors, nor drying dishes; but will, on the contrary, “give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine,” or teaching, as Paul enjoined in the 13th verse of this chapter. If Paul had said, Till I come give attendance to making beds, sweeping floors, and drying dishes, then preachers would have some authority for annoying sisters in the homes where they stay by obtruding their services where they are not needed, and thus not desired, nor appreciated. It is not beneath a preacher's dignity to help in his own home, nor anywhere else that he is needed. But he should not be a meddler.

What gift was bestowed on Timothy? We are not definitely informed, and would better not try to decide. Yet we have an intimation in regard to it in chapter 1:7 of the 2nd letter to Timothy.

What is meant by the word “presbytery,” as recorded in the last of the 14th verse? It means eldership, and should have been thus translated. The gift that was bestowed on Timothy is mentioned also in 2 Timothy 1:6, which indicates that Paul laid his hands on Timothy in connection with the hands of the eldership that were laid on him. Be this as it may, Timothy was not so highly gifted that he did not need instruction from an apostle. But his gift seems to have been that of “power , and of love, and of a sound mind.” Therefore, excepting this general gift, he was of the same class with uninspired preachers of the Gospel, who need to receive instruction by the inspired writings.

Did Paul intend that Timothy should divide his time between preaching and secular callings? The 15th verse indicates that he did not thus intend.

Did Paul intend that Timothy should be careful concerning himself and the doctrine that was committed to him? He did, and assured him that by so doing he should both save himself and those who would hear him.

CHAPTER V

What is set forth in this chapter for our learning? Instructions are here set forth for Timothy to observe in regard to his behavior toward an elder, older women, younger women and widows; also in regard to the care which the children or nephews should have for dependent widows. Then we learn of the care which the church should have over a certain class of widows. Instructions are next set forth con-

cerning “the younger widows.” This is followed by instructions concerning the honor which a certain class of elders should receive, and of the care that Timothy should exercise in receiving an accusation against an elder. instructions in regard to rebuking those that would sin, and in regard to being impartial, and being deliberate, without such delay as would make him responsible for the sins of others, are next given. This is followed by instructions to Timothy concerning his physical health, and the chapter is ended with remarks in regard to the sins of some and good works of others, sometimes going into judgment before them and sometimes following after them.

What may we learn by considering the 1st, 2nd and 3rd verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul intended that Timothy should be a model in his behavior toward both old and young in the Church.

And what of the instructions given in this chapter with reference to care for widows? It is in harmony with justice and mercy. As a result it is approved by all mankind who learn of it and are capable of knowing what justice and mercy are. Widows who have children or nephews that are able to take care of them should be cared for by them in order to prevent the church from being burdened or “charged” with caring for them.

And what of Paul's instructions concerning the “younger widows”? The wisdom of that which he offered in regard to them is evident as soon as it is considered aright.

What is the bearing of the 6th verse? Its bearing shows that persons may be dead and alive at the same time—dead in one sense, but alive in another. This verse may be used to confute materialists who pretend to think that the word “dead,” as recorded in the Bible, always means unconsciousness.

And what of the 8th verse? It indicates that a man who has anyone depending on him for support cannot be a Christian if he neglects his dependent ones, and does not provide for them, at least, in the common comforts of life.

What of the 9th and 10th verses? They inform us in regard to the special class of widows that were intended to be cared for by the church. The special value of the 10th verse is that it indicates to us the place that feet-washing occupied in the New Testament Church. It is here mentioned in the midst of a verse which begins with good works, continues with them, and ends with them. Besides these good works are all incidental, and are required to be

done as time and occasion might furnish opportunity for them. Thus it was, and thus it is, with bringing up children, lodging strangers, and relieving the afflicted, and thus it must be with washing the saints' feet. Those works were all incidental and not something positively required of all church members, as baptism and the Lord's supper are required. The word "if" indicates this. Paul did not say, "If she has been baptized and attended to the communion. Why not? Because she could not become a member of the church without baptism, and could not continue a member if she refused to attend to the communion. In view of all this, what may we say of those who declare that washing the saints' feet is an ordinance in the church, and should be attended to as such? We may say of them that they "do err, not knowing the Scriptures." Besides, they adopt a method of reasoning which will, if followed, result in confusing all mankind with reference to the Bible. If washing saints' feet may be regarded as an ordinance in the church so may the bringing up of children, the lodging of strangers and the relieving of the afflicted be regarded as ordinances. Besides, baptism and the Lord's supper may be regarded as good works. The principle that the meaning of words is known by the connection in which they are found is ignored by those who speak of feet-washing as an ordinance, and the way is opened by their reasoning for any error to be introduced.

What is indicated by the 17th verse? The "double honor" referred to in that verse must have reference to material support. There is an honor due to all elders as rulers. This is indicated in Hebrews 13:17. But those who, in addition to ruling well, "labor in word and doctrine," deserve another "honor," and the kind of honor referred to is evident from the 18th verse, in which is quoted the same scripture that we find quoted when Paul was reasoning in regard to the support of preachers. See I Corinthians 9:7-14. This settles the question concerning the meaning of the word "honor" in the scripture under consideration.

What may we learn by considering the 19th verse? We may learn that whenever a charge is to be brought against an elder, it should be heard by an evangelist. And, in view of the seriousness of any charge against an elder, the evangelist selected to hear it should be one of the maturest, and the best, in knowledge and wisdom. While the eldership of a church is without a charge against it, the church is "in order" and officially capable of managing its own affairs. If the eldership feels the need of outside counsel, it

should secure it. But the person, or persons, called for counsel should not be regarded as officials in the church. Yet if an elder, or one elder, of two or more, is under censure so that any charge, or charges, need to be brought against him, then the verse under consideration shows that an evangelist should be selected to sit in judgment on the merits of the case. The wisdom of this is evident. A brother elder might be supposed to be partial, and, however just he might be, the charge of jealousy, or of "partiality," might be brought against him with some force, or plausibility. Therefore, the divine arrangement is to take the case out of the local congregation for adjustment, except that the congregation will be depended on for testimony. At the same time the evangelist that is chosen to hear the case should be careful in regard to receiving the accusation that is made. If it is not made in writing, and properly signed, it should be made before two or three witnesses. The importance of this precaution is evident to us as soon as we consider that an accuser sometimes becomes alarmed in the progress of a case, and denies, or modifies, the accusation that he made.

What of the 20th verse? It authorized Timothy to rebuke before all those that sinned, that others also might fear. But all who feel constrained to imitate Timothy in this respect should be very cautious, and should never rebuke any one in a ridiculing or degrading manner. For instance, if an evangelist feels constrained to rebuke some one for disturbing a meeting, he should not tell the story of a preacher rebuking a simpleton, and that he feared to rebuke another lest he might rebuke another of the same kind. All other degrading remarks should be avoided.

What is indicated in the 21st verse? The indication is that Timothy was warned against being partial, and that all evangelists, especially, should avoid partiality in their execution of the divine law. Such precaution is important for elders, deacons, and all other Christians. This prepares us to consider the 22nd verse. Timothy as a disciplinarian was not to "lay hands suddenly" on any man. Neither was he to delay doing his duty so that he would become "a partaker of other men's sins," but he was to keep himself "pure." Paul kept himself "pure from the blood of all men" by not shunning to declare all the counsel of God. See Acts 20:26, 27. This indicates that Timothy could keep himself "pure" by doing his whole duty without haste, and yet without unnecessary delay. The Greek word here translated "suddenly" means "quickly, speedily; soon, shortly;

hastily, with inconsiderate haste.” These shades of meaning indicate that Timothy should not be inconsiderate in the exercise of discipline either in hearing a charge against an elder, or in hearing a charge against any other member in a church that had not been set in order, and which, as a result, was under the care of an evangelist. Finally, the Greek word here translated “lay” means “to put, place, or lay upon; to impose as a name; to inflict; to set, fall upon, assail, assault, attack.” These shades of meaning show that in this verse Paul was still addressing Timothy in regard to the exercise of discipline.

In view of all that has just been stated, what should we say of those who declare that Paul was here writing to Timothy in regard to laying on of hands in ordaining men for the eldership? We should say that they ignore those shades of meaning of the Greek words here used in regard to this subject, which the connection in which these words here occur require to be adopted. As a result, they confuse themselves, and confuse all who have confidence in them as expounders of these scriptures. They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures,” for they show that they do not consider aright the force of the connection in which the word in question occurs.

But what should we say to those who declare that the expression “lay hands,” as here recorded in the Greek text of the New Testament, should be accepted in a spiritual sense, for it is not used in any other place in the New Testament except in a spiritual sense, and to confer a blessing? We should answer that even if this could all be shown to be true, yet it would not show that this expression, as here used, does not refer to Timothy's work in exercising discipline. On the contrary, such acceptance of this expression is thereby confirmed, for discipline in the church, from first to last, is a spiritual work, and is intended to confer a blessing. According to 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5, the exercise of discipline was intended to bless the church, and, finally, bless the man who is excluded from the church.

What use may we make of the 23rd verse of this chapter? We may use it against all those who oppose the use of all physical remedies for physical ailments, whether they appear as advocates of so-called “faith cure,” or of so-called “mental science,” or of any other speculative shade of modern speculative healing. Paul wrote to Timothy to use a certain physical remedy for a certain physical ailment, and did not add a word about faith cure, nor any other cure. Moreover, why did Paul suffer Epaphroditus to be “sick

nigh unto death” (Philippians 2:26,27), and why did he leave Trophimus “at Miletum sick” (2 Timothy 4:20), if the “faith cure” doctrine was intended to prevail in the Gospel Age?

But what should we say to those who use this scripture as an apology for drinking wine as a beverage? We should inform them that they pervert this scripture, and thus “wrest” it from its proper application, and we should refer them to the danger of so doing. See 2 Peter 3:16.

How do some men's sins and the good works of others go before them to judgment, while others they follow? These results may be accomplished thus: A man who induces another to become a drunkard may live to see that drunkard become impoverished, become insane, and commit suicide, while in other instances these results may follow a man's bad work after he is dead. On the other hand, some men may do good which will be seen in this life, and may even pass before them into the world beyond, while the good that others do may not be developed till after they are dead. These scriptures are in constant fulfillment. Sometimes one part of a man's work goes before him, while another part follows him, in its results.

CHAPTER VI

What is set forth in this chapter for the benefit of Bible readers? Instructions concerning believing servants toward their masters, and believing masters toward their servants, are first set forth. These are followed by a command to Timothy in regard to teaching and exhorting with reference to the mentioned instructions, and a record of Paul's sentence against those who “teach otherwise,” and how Timothy should act with reference to them. The benefit of godliness with contentment is then stated, also the reason for that which is here stated in regard to it. They that will be rich are then mentioned and described, also the love of money. This is followed by an exhortation to Timothy as a man of God to flee those things, and to “fight the good fight of faith.” We next find a “charge” that Paul gave to Timothy concerning himself, and then a “charge” which he should bring to bear on the “rich.” In conclusion, Paul exhorted Timothy to keep that which was committed to his trust, and to avoid certain errors that he named, and stated that some by professing those errors had “erred concerning the faith.”

What may we say of Paul's directions concerning servants

and masters in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? They show that the New Covenant Scriptures recognize the relationship of master and slave. The Greek word here translated “servants” first of all means “enslaved, enthralled, subservient,” and was applied to bond-servants, who were under “the yoke” of bondage. The same word is applied to Christians, in the New Testament, for they are the bond-servants of Christ—bought with his blood.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses? We may learn that Paul's sentence against those who would venture to deviate from his teaching was severe. The Greek word here translated by the word “proud” means “conceited, demented with conceit,” and this is true of all religious innovators, on the one hand, and of all religious hobbyists on the other. They are all “demented with conceit.” To accomplish their ends, by deceiving persons, they may assume humility, but they are in reality hardened with conceit. A challenge for the name of any one who ever gave the Church any trouble, either as an innovator, or a hobbyist, who was not burdened with conceit, may be safely offered. For this reason Paul seemed to feel the importance of expressing himself twice in Romans 12th chapter against conceit.

What of the 6th, 7th and 8th verses? They set forth statements concerning the disposition which is opposed to that which Paul had just condemned. His description of the condemnable disposition that he wrote against was summed up in the words, “supposing that gain is godliness,” and the disposition here commended is that which says, “godliness with contentment is great gain.”

And what of those who “will be rich”? Solomon declared, “He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house” (Proverbs 15:27) ' and Paul here declares that which indicates something worse than for a man to trouble his own house. Those that “will be rich” will lose their souls. This is followed by the statement that “a root of all evil is the love of money, “ as the Greek of this text should be translated. The translation found in the Common Version of this text is too intense.

Of whom are we informed in the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th verses? We are informed of God and Christ, especially of God. Paul wrote of him, in the first of the 13th verse, then referred to him in the 1st of the 15th verse, and then in the entire 16th verse. In each of these verses the supremacy is ascribed to him. He “quickeneth all things,” and

he will “in his times show” Christ as the “King of kings and Lord of lords.” See Revelation 17:14; 19:16. Then the 16th verse is entirely with reference to God as the Supreme One. The Greek word translated “hath” in the expression “hath immortality” means “to hold,” as its first meaning. In view of this we can understand that

God is the only one who “hath immortality,” as he is the only one who holds it because he is the author of it.

What may we learn by considering Paul's charge in regard to those church members that are rich in the things of this world? We may learn that Paul intended that Timothy should warn them against the common effect of earthly riches, namely, high-mindedness. But what of the 9th verse? It informs us that by the right use of earthly riches those who possess them may show faithfulness which will help them to “lay hold on eternal life.” This charge of Paul to Timothy, in regard to those who are rich, may be justly regarded as an explanation of Luke 16:9. In that verse the Savior commanded his disciples so to use the things of this world that they might secure “friends” who would receive them into “everlasting habitations.” God and Christ are such “friends,” and, in the verse before us, Paul indicates that the right use of riches will assist Christ's disciples in laying “hold on eternal life.” Those who gain “eternal life” will enter into “everlasting habitations.”

What may we say of the 20th and 21st verses of this chapter? They set forth a solemn charge to Timothy in regard to keeping that which had been committed to him, and in regard to that which he should avoid. Have any professed disciples recently erred by “professing” “profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called”? They have. All who have professed themselves “evolutionists” and “higher critics,” among disciples, have “erred concerning the faith.” They have professed themselves to be of the cause of falsely-named science, and have been entangled and confused by its errors. There are two reasons for this. First, those who have espoused the cause of falsely-named science never studied the Bible sufficiently to understand it. Secondly, they were not possessed of sufficient strength of comparison to detect and expose all the fallacies offered by the projectors of the mentioned falsely-named science. By reason of their incompetency from a Biblical viewpoint they were disposed to venture upon that domain of thought, and by reason of their lack of suitable brain for such work they were overwhelmed with the fallacies offered to them in that domain.

What may we say of the letter, that we have just considered, as a document? It is solemn and dignified, and is rich in teaching both affirmatively and negatively. It should be the first part of a manual for preachers of Christ, and should be carefully studied by all others who desire to understand what a preacher of Christ should be and do. If all preachers of Christ had studied this letter aright, and the other letters of Paul to preachers, the apostasy from the simplicity that is in Christ would have been made impossible.

2nd TIMOTHY

CHAPTER I

What is here set forth for our learning? We are informed in this letter that Paul wrote of himself as an “apostle,” and addressed Timothy as his “son,” also that “without ceasing” he made mention of Timothy in his prayers, and stated that he greatly wished to see him. Then we are informed that Paul made mention of the “faith” that was in him, and that was previously in his grandmother and mother. Next we are informed that Paul reminded him that he should “stir up the gift” that he had received, and then intimated concerning that which had been given to him. This is followed by the command not to be ashamed of the testimony of Christ, nor of Paul as his prisoner, but to be a “partaker of the afflictions of the gospel.” Then Paul wrote of God and of the salvation which he had manifested through Christ. This is followed by remarks of Paul concerning himself as a preacher and an apostle. Next he commanded Timothy to hold fast the “form of sound words,” and to keep “that good thing which was committed” to him. Paul then mentioned to Timothy that all who were in Asia had “turned away from” him. The chapter ends with honorable mention of a man named Onesiphorus.

What is indicated in the 5th verse of this chapter? The indication is that Timothy had a good mother and grandmother. This may explain Philippians 2:20. Some persons are naturally good.

What of the 7th verse? An intimation is here given of the kind of gift that had been conferred on Timothy. He was naturally good, and God had given to him “the spirit . . . of power and of love, and of a sound mind.” This may have been the “gift” bestowed on him. But, be this as it may, the exhortation in the 8th verse was based on that which is mentioned in the 7th verse. That exhortation is applicable to all preachers of Christ, and to all other Christians.

What is indicated in the 9th verse? God's purpose concerning Christ before the world was brought into actual exist-

ence is here indicated. The best specimens of men desire beings in their own image who will love them because of love which they will first show to those beings. As a result of that desire they enter into the marriage relationship though aware of its dangers. On this principle God projected this world. See 1 John 4:19. God foresaw that man would not bear the first trial of his love for his divine Father, and, therefore, he prepared beforehand to give him a second trial. This second trial required that he should arrange to give Christ to die in order to prove to mankind the divine Father's love, and thereby accomplish the end mentioned in 1 John 4:19.

Has Christ really “abolished death,” as is declared in the 10th verse? No. The translation expressed by the word “abolished” is too intense. The Greek word here used first means “to render useless, or unproductive, occupy unprofitably, to render powerless.” In view of these primary shades of meaning we can understand that the Holy Spirit intended to signify that Christ has deprived death of its power to hold mankind in its embrace. The Gospel facts are consummated in the resurrection of Christ, and by his resurrection he made a show of triumph over the power of death, and thus “brought life and immortality to light.” They had been promised, but had not been previously demonstrated.

What may we say of the 11th and 12th verses? In the 11th Paul makes mention of the fact that he had been appointed a preacher, also an apostle and a teacher; while in the 12th we are informed by him of his sufferings, and of his confidence.

Is it still important for preachers to “hold fast the form of sound words” given to them in the Sacred Text, as Paul enjoined Timothy to do? It certainly is, and by holding fast to those words they may be able to keep their teaching free from error, and even correct errors which have been adopted. What is true in regard to preachers in this respect may be safely affirmed of all others.

Did the fact that all who were in Asia turned from Paul, as he mentions in the 15th verse, prove that he was wrong in any particular? No. But the results have shown that they were wrong who turned from him. The churches in Asia all fell from grace—became corrupt in both doctrine and practice—apostatized—were blotted out of existence. The only seeming exception to this is found in the so-called Greek Catholic church, which may be found in Asiatic Rus-

sia. If professed disciples now “turn away” from a preacher of Christ, does this prove that he is wrong? It does not. Whether he is right or wrong must be determined by an. other standard of measuring.

What may we say of Paul's mention of Onesiphorus? It indicates that Paul did not forget his friends, and this should be regarded as a good example for all mankind.

CHAPTER II

Of what are we here informed? Information is here given that Paul desired Timothy to be strong in divine favor, and to commit what he had learned of Paul to faithful men, also that he should “endure hardness,” and as an encouragement he referred to a man who engaged in a warfare, also to one who strove for an earthly crown in contests, and then to the farmer. Paul then exhorted Timothy onward to the end of the chapter, and in connection with his exhortation he gave much information which all Christians should consider.

What is the bearing of the 2nd verse of this chapter? Its bearing is safety for the Church. If that verse had been fully obeyed by all preachers in the primitive Church the apostasy would have been deferred, and, if possible, prevented. Certainly the rapid decline of a part of the disciple brotherhood from primitive simplicity in the 19th Century might have been avoided if all preachers of Christ in that century had fully obeyed the command given in the scripture now under consideration. The apostasy that was accomplished in the early centuries in the Gospel Age was only made possible because of a lack of faithful teachers in the Church to check the presumption of ambitious bishops. In the 19th Century the apostasy that was accomplished resulted from a lack of faithful bishops and other teachers to check the presumption of ambitious preachers. In view of all this we can understand the importance of all evangelists studying the Word of God till they understand it, and then teaching faithful men so as to enable them to be teachers of others.

What may we say of the 3rd verse and onward to the end of the 7th? All that is set forth in these verses may be regarded as instructions intended to impress Timothy so as to make of him an unflinching preacher of the Gospel. Paul's reference to the single purpose of the true soldier, to the lawful striving of those who would win a crown in earthly contests, and to the labor of the husbandman, all

these references were intended to impress Timothy so as to make of him a “good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

But does not the 6th verse seem to be out of harmony with the context, as it intimates in favor of reward for service rather than in favor of service in order to reward? Yes; but a later translation corrects that idea by rendering that verse thus: “It is necessary for the husbandman to labor before he partakes of the fruits.” This translation is in harmony with the context and will stand the test of fair criticism.

Why did Paul, in several instances, write of the Gospel as he did in the 8th verse? In chapter 1:11 of the first letter to Timothy Paul wrote of the Gospel as having been committed to his trust. In view of the fact that the Gospel was committed to his trust he was justified in writing of it as “my gospel.” But we should not write thus, nor speak thus, for the Gospel has not been committed to us as it was committed to Paul.

What may we learn by the 9th verse? We may learn that even when an apostle was bound, yet the word of God was not bound. In view of this we may learn also that when the Apostles died the word of God did not die, and neither did the commission die that was given to the Apostles. Though the Apostles are dead, personally, yet they are alive, officially.

What of the 10th verse, and on to the end of the 13th? The 10th verse of this chapter should be read in connection with the 16th verse of the 1st chapter of the first letter. Paul was chosen to “suffer many things” for the name of Christ, and to be “a pattern” to believers, and he was required to “endure all things for the elects' sake.”

What of the 13th verse? By it we may learn that man's unbelief will not change the purposes of Christ. If mankind, in their perverseness, will not accept salvation on the terms of the Gospel, Christ will not change those terms in order to suit that perverseness. Romans 3:3,4 should be considered in this connection. In view of all this the idea that the Lord can save mankind in any way is erroneous.

Is the 14th verse of importance as a warning in this generation? It certainly is. The cause of religion is still afflicted with technical reasoners, who “strive about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” The words “trinity” and “depravity,” with the expressions “getting religion” and “design of baptism,” may serve as illustrations of words that have been discussed “to no profit, but

to the subverting of the hearers,” in modern times. They are all humanly-coined words or expressions, and are confusing. In opposition to all such words and expressions all Christians should obey the command given in the 15th verse, and should never forget I Peter 4:11. To observe with care all the divinely given divisions of “the word of truth,” and to “speak as the oracles of God,” will prove an effective remedy against every doctrine and practice that will subvert, or pervert, hearers.

What of the 16th, 17th and 18th verses? They should serve as warnings to all who read them. Certain men had speculated concerning the resurrection, and declared that it was past. As a result the faith of some was overthrown. But Paul followed the mentioned warnings with words of consolation in the 19th verse. In I Corinthians 3:11 we learn that Christ is the divine foundation, and in Hebrews 13:8 we learn that Christ is always the same. In view of these scriptures we can understand the declaration that, “The foundation of God standeth sure,” also the declaration that, “The Lord knoweth them that are his.” He understands them, or recognizes them, or approves them. In view of all this, Paul commanded, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

What may we learn by considering the 20th and 21st verses? That which is set forth in the 20th verse was intended for illustration, while the statement found in the 21st verse is an application of that illustration to the life of the Christian. By purging, or cleansing, our lives from all iniquity we may be acceptable to the Lord, and “prepared unto every good work.” The 22nd and 23rd verses of this chapter bear in the same direction, and in proportion as they are obeyed by Christians we shall be useful and find acceptance in the Lord's sight.

What is set forth for us in the 24th, 25th and 26th verses? We find here that a statement of the gentle and meek character of the Lord's servant is set forth. But what is meant by the expression, “oppose themselves,” as found in the 25th verse? All wrong-doers certainly “oppose themselves,” for they live in opposition to their best interests. They are in “the snare of the devil,” for they are “taken captive by him at his will.” But even such persons may be led to repentance by the power of the truth. . In order to lead such to repentance all Christians should be “gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.”

CHAPTER III

Of what are we informed in this chapter? Paul mentioned first the perilous times that would come in the last days, and that the reason for such times would be found in bad men connected with the Church. After describing those men Paul stated what would become of them. Then he referred Timothy to the fact that he had fully known him in doctrine and other particulars, informed him of persecutions, wrote of “evil men and seducers,” exhorted Timothy to continue in what he had learned, and stated the purposes for which inspired scripture was given.

Have we any evidence that any men connected with disciples of Christ now are as bad as those were to whom Paul referred in the first of this chapter? We certainly have, and we don't need to go beyond innovators and hobbyists among disciples in order to find them. They have “a form of godliness,” but deny “the power thereof,” for while pretending to be disciples of Christ they will not be satisfied with the truth in its fulness, plainness, and simplicity. Besides, the innovators especially are flatterers of women, and try to accomplish their ends by praising them, and thus creep into homes.

What of the 8th verse? Paul named certain Egyptian magicians, though their names are not given in any other part of the Bible. Then he wrote of their opposition to Moses to illustrate the bad conduct of the bad men that he said would be found “in the last times.” To this he added that these bad men would be checked.

What did Paul mean by the expression “my doctrine,” as found in the 10th verse? We may learn by considering the expression, “committed unto me,” as recorded in Titus 1:3. That which was committed to Paul to make known he sometimes wrote of as if it belonged to him. But he was careful to state in another place that he had received from Christ that which he made known. (See Galatians 1:11,12.)

Is the declaration in the 12th verse still true? It is strictly true even now. Men and women may be truthful, upright, honest, and good in all other earthward relations, without suffering persecution. But when they really become godly, then they will bring so many under condemnation that they will soon be persecuted.

What of the 13th verse? It is still true. Evil men and seducers are still growing “worse and worse.” Many of them once obeyed the Gospel—in form at least. But they soon

found themselves not in harmony with true disciples. Then they began to show themselves. When correction was offered to them they resented it, and showed their hatefulness. Soon they threw off all restraint and went “from bad to worse.”

What of Paul's exhortation and assurance as recorded in the 14th and 15th verses? In them we find that Paul was confident that Timothy had been taught aright from his childhood. This gave to Timothy a special advantage. He was naturally good (Philippians 2:20), and he had been properly taught.

What may we learn by considering the 16th and 17th verses of this chapter? We may learn the purposes or ends for which inspired scripture was given. The expression “given by inspiration of God” is a translation of a Greek word made up of two other words which literally mean “God breathed.” This is an index to the make-up, or substance, of the Holy Spirit. He is a person made up of the breath of God, even as Christ, before he took upon himself the form of man, was a person made up of the Word of God. In addition to all this we may learn by considering the verses now before us that the inspired scripture was intended to be both affirmative and negative. The words “doctrine” and “instruction” are both affirmative, while “reproof” and “correction” are both negative. All this when taken together enables us to conclude that mankind have needed to be taught what is right, and then reproofed and corrected in regard to that which is wrong. The entire Bible is in harmony with this conclusion. Probably about one half of the Bible is affirmative and the other half negative—one half is devoted to setting forth the truth, and the other half is devoted to opposing error. This being true certainly those preachers make a mistake that are chiefly affirmative, 'even as those do that are chiefly negative. Those that are of the former class may become popular, but congregations become corrupt under their labors, while those that make up the latter class seldom build up a congregation, but often scatter or paralyze such as others have built up.

CHAPTER IV

Of what are we here informed? Information is here given of Paul's final charge to Timothy, of his reason for giving that charge, also of his reference to his own death, his life, and his prospects. Then we are informed of certain directions which Paul gave to Timothy with reference to visiting

him, also of his mention and warning concerning a certain man who did him much evil. Next we find a statement from Paul of the fact that he had been forsaken when he made his “first answer” at Rome, but that the Lord delivered him, and would deliver him. The chapter is ended with mention of certain persons, also the command to Timothy to do his diligence to visit him “before winter,” and with the benediction.

What may we say of Paul's last charge to Timothy in regard to preaching? It is solemn and dignified, and is in perfect harmony with the last two verses in the preceding chapter. According to those verses inspired scriptures are was given to accomplish a two-fold purpose, or end—one affirmative and the other negative. The words “doctrine” and “instruction” indicate their affirmative end, while the words “reproof” and “correction” indicate their negative end. In harmony with all this Paul charged Timothy to “preach” and “exhort,” likewise to “reprove” and “rebuke.” This charge was given “before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick [living] and dead.” This judging will be done when he will appear again, and then will be made manifest his “everlasting kingdom,” of which we read in 2 Peter 1:11.

What may we say of the reason which Paul gave to Timothy with reference to the mentioned charge? We can understand what it means by considering the condition of mind now in the religious world commonly called “Christendom.” Roman Catholic religious literature abounds in fables, and the same is true of Protestant religious literature as issued by Protestant sects. Rome's fables are chiefly with reference to some supposed miraculous external appearances, and deeds by some supposed saints, while the Protestant fables are chiefly with reference to some internal miraculous operation supposed to be wrought by the Holy Spirit.

These are offered to the masses of mankind, in so-called Christendom, by Romish and Protestant pulpit performers, instead of the word of God which Paul commanded Timothy to preach. In proportion as mankind forget the Gospel, or remain ignorant of it, they will be disposed to turn from it, and “heap to themselves teachers” who will gratify their “itching ears.” That is to say, in proportion as mankind do not understand the Gospel they will desire to be gratified by hearing something in the line of fables. Then in proportion as those who seem to understand what the Gospel is, will desire popularity, they will wish to hear fables.

What is indicated by the command, "Be instant, in season out of season"? Instead of the words "be instant," a certain translator says, "be urgent." Then the expression "in season, out of season," may be understood by considering Ecclesiastes 11:6. The business of the preacher of Christ is to be prompt, earnest, urgent, at all times, and in all circumstances. He cannot decide beforehand when or where the Gospel will succeed best. But by doing his full duty he will "make full proof of" his "ministry."

What may we learn by considering the 6th, 7th and 8th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Paul judged that he was near, the end of his life, also that, as he thought of the past, he did not have any regrets, and that, as he thought of the future, he did not have any fears. He had purposed to "finish" his "course with joy" (Acts 20:24), and now he was about to see his purpose accomplished. In the mention that he here made of that which was before him as a joy he included "all them also who love his appearing." This means that all who will so live that they will die the death of Christians will, in the last day, receive "a crown of righteousness." This is the end which all mankind should consider every day that they live, and which they should every day strive to be prepared for when the close of life will come.

What may we say of Demas, as he is mentioned in the 10th verse? His disposition has been shown by many other preachers. Some of them profess to be apostolic.

What of Paul's prayer concerning Alexander the coppersmith? It indicates that Paul had lost all hope of his conversion, and, therefore, prayed that the Lord would "reward him according to his works." This is a dreadful prayer, but if it had not been right, then Paul would not have offered it. This prayer indicates that the Lord will reward all who oppose his words according to their works, even as he will reward all other evil-doers. This bears heavily against the enemies of faithful disciples.

Did the brethren at Rome show themselves to be Paul's friends when he made his "first answer" before the emperor of Rome, to whom he had appealed in order to save his life? The 16th verse implies that they did not. With all their faith (Romans 1:8) they seemed unwilling to identify themselves with him when he was on trial for his life. They may have thought that his "appeal to Caesar" was unnecessary (Acts 25:11), or, for some other reason, they seemed to conclude that they were not required to let the emperor

know that they were Christians. Be this as it may, Paul felt that he was alone, as far as his brethren were concerned, when the severest test came, and he felt it severely. The same was true of Christ when he was arrested to be put on trial for his life. See Mark 14:27, 50. But the Lord did not forsake Paul. Besides, he felt assured that the Lord would not forsake him, but would deliver him “from every evil work.” This did not mean that the Lord would not suffer him to be put to death, but that he would give him grace to bear all that divine mercy would suffer him to endure. See 2 Corinthians 12:9.

The last of this chapter is devoted to mention of certain persons, the command that Timothy should be diligent to come to him before winter, and with Paul's benediction.

TITUS

CHAPTER I

What is here set forth for Bible readers to consider? That Paul declared himself to be a servant of God, and an apostle of Christ, and then made remarks concerning “God's elect,” the “hope of eternal life,” and the “preaching” of the Gospel, we find in the first part of the first chapter of this letter. Next we find that Paul addressed Titus as his “own son after the common faith,” and stated to him the reasons that he left him in the island Crete. In his statement of these reasons Paul mentioned the qualifications which men should have who were to be “Ordained,” or appointed, to be elders of the church. This is followed by a statement of the reasons that elders, or bishops, should be “blameless” characters, and should be able “to convince the gainsayers.” Paul next set forth a brief description of the Cretians, quoting with endorsement a statement that one of their own number had made concerning them. The chapter is ended with certain instructions to Titus with reference to his preaching, and certain remarks concerning those who are “pure” and those who are “defiled.”

What may we learn by considering the 1st, 2nd and 3rd verses of the chapter now before us? We may learn that Paul was a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, and that he held these two positions “according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.” The Greek word here translated “according to” also means “in virtue of,” and “as respects.” This last shade of meaning touches the idea that Paul wished to present, judging from Christ's purpose in sending him to the Gentiles. See Acts 26:18. That is to say, Paul was chosen to be an apostle with reference to producing faith in those who would be willing to accept the truth he would preach, and acknowledge the truth which is after, or according to, godliness. Then, in the 2nd verse, Paul made mention of the “hope of eternal life” which God had promised before the world began. The Greek

word here translated “promised” also means “undertake”, and this is the idea in this instance. God, in his purpose, undertook the enterprise of man's redemption before he created man. The end that he had in view was to accomplish that which is stated in 1 John 4:19, and this end was divinely intended to be accomplished by the “preaching” of “his word.”

What of the 5th verse, and onward to the end of the 9th? Paul here stated to Titus the reasons he had left him in Crete, and these reasons show that Paul had “appointed” him as an agent to set the churches in Crete in order. Jews from Crete were present on the day of Pentecost, as mentioned in Acts 2:11. Those Jews, or some of them at least, were probably then converted to Christ, and went back to Crete. There they made known the truth they had accepted, and established churches. But in those churches elders had not been appointed to the office of bishops, and Paul left Titus in Crete to “set in order the things that” were “wanting, and ordain elders in every city.” Deacons were also necessary, and regulations needed to be given, so that the churches in Crete could go onward in the divinely intended work. They could worship without elders and deacons having been appointed, but the fullness of the work which the Lord intended to accomplish through the Church required that the churches should be fully set in order. The qualifications for the eldership, or the bishop's office, were considered in the remarks offered on the 3rd chapter of the 1st letter to Timothy, and, for that reason, need not to be definitely considered now.

What may we say of the 10th and 11th verses? In those verses we learn that the advocates of Jewish circumcision among Gentile Christians were “unruly, and vain talkers, deceivers.” They had made a hobby of circumcision, and showed themselves to be “gainsayers,” “unruly, and vain talkers, and deceivers,” even as hobbyists now show themselves to be. For this reason every bishop needs to hold “fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”

What of Paul's description of the “Cretians” as such? It indicates that the “gainsayers” with reference to whom he wrote were showing their Cretian disposition, and were, therefore, manifesting their human nature. Do not all hobbyists show their human nature, rather than their better judgment, when they try to advocate, or defend, their hobbies? They certainly do, and, as a rule, they show

that the right use of reason, and of scripture, they will discard in order to make an appearance in favor of their hobbies.

What is indicated in the 13th and 14th verses? That sharp rebukes would be necessary for the “gainsayers,” and “liars,” in order that they might be “sound in the faith” and that they should not give “heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men that turn from the truth.” This indicates the kind of treatment that all “gainsayers” should now receive.

In what sense is it true that to “the pure all things are pure”? In the sense mentioned in Romans 14:14 ' 20. 1 Corinthians 6:12,13. That is to say, “meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth” (I Timothy 4:3), are pure to those that are pure in themselves, but such meats, and all other pure things, are not pure to those who are “defiled.” The last verse of this chapter indicates that those ' of whom Paul wrote, in this instance, as “defiled” persons, were religious professors, who professed that they knew God, but in works they denied him. Many of that class are now among professors of Christ. They are self-deceived, and will learn their real condition when too late to repent.

CHAPTER II

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter? They may learn that the Apostle Paul, as an inspired man, gave instructions in this chapter to Titus, in regard to himself, to “aged men,” also to “aged women,” to “young women,” to “young men,” and to “servants.” The chapter next offers certain declarations concerning “the grace of God,” and its “teaching” in regard to Christians, and to Christ as their Redeemer. In the last verse Titus was commanded to “speak and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority,” and not to let any man “despise” him.

In view of the expression “sound doctrine” in the 1st verse, what are we authorized to conclude in regard to all else recorded in this chapter? It consists of “sound doctrine,” or of instructions which “become sound doctrine,” “ or are in harmony with such doctrine. How many separate classes of persons are addressed in this chapter? Five classes are here addressed, besides Titus and Christians, generally.

Is there anything unusual in the 3rd verse? Yes. The

Greek word translated “false accusers” means “calumniator, slanderer, a treacherous informer, traitor,” and is one of the names for the devil. That word is found in the English in the word “diabolical,” and means devilish. In view of this we may learn that a slanderer is a diabolical, or devilish, character, whether that character exists in the form of a woman, or a man.

What may we learn by considering the expression “not given to much wine,” as recorded in the 3rd verse? We may learn that aged women were permitted to drink wine when Paul wrote to Titus, but were restricted in regard to quantity. This indicates that wine-drinking did not have the bad reputation then that it now has. All drinking of wine, except when used as medicine, now has “the appearance of evil,” and, according to 1 Thessalonians 5:22, should be avoided by all Christians. The same is true in regard to all other intoxicants.

Do we find anything unusual in the 4th and 5th verses? Yes. The “aged women” are required to be teachers of the “young women,” and they are to teach them in regard to certain departments of life which, in some particulars, should not be brought before the general public. Here is authority for special teachers for a special class, and that mature women are to be teachers.

What of the 6th, 7th and 8th verses? In them we find the duty of Titus with reference to “young men” set forth. We learn that he was required to exhort young men to be “sober-minded,” and to show himself “in all things” to be “a pattern of good works.”

What is the meaning of the word “purloining,” as found in the 10th verse? The Greek word thus translated, in this instance, means “to deprive, rob, to appropriate, make secret reservation.” In view of these shades of meaning we can understand that “purloining” in the mentioned verse means stealing.

What of the 11th verse? It should be translated thus: “For the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared.” This translation avoids the statement that “the grace of God hath appeared to all men,” which may be justly denied, as far as that grace is shown in the Gospel. That grace, or favor, as set forth in the Gospel, had not appeared to all men when Paul wrote to Titus, nor has it yet appeared to all men. But it has brought salvation to all men; at least the assurance of salvation from the grave is declared in the Gospel. Sep I Corinthians 15:22.

But what does “the grace of God, “ as made known in the Gospel, teach? It teaches both negatively and affirmatively—teaches us what we should deny ourselves, and how we should live. That is to say, it teaches us that “we should deny ourselves “ungodliness and worldly lusts,” also that we should “live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” Not only so, but it teaches us that we should look for “that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior, Jesus Christ.” In view of all this, what may we say of those professed Christians who visit theaters, dancing halls, horse races, pool-rooms, and card-tables, or any other places of ungodly resort? They belong to the class of professors mentioned in the last verse of the preceding chapter. The 14th verse of this chapter, likewise, forbids all ungodliness, whether in speech, in conduct, or only in appearance.

How could Titus prevent persons from despising him? In 2 Corinthians 4:2 we may learn that “by manifestation of the truth” a man may commend himself “to every man's conscience in the sight of God.” Those who make such a “manifestation” will not be despised personally, though they may be despised doctrinally. But if a preacher, or any other man, will act the part of a slouch, on the one hand, or of a fop, on the other, he will be despised by those who think aright. A dandy hat, a flashy necktie, a swaggering gait, a smirking expression, a bluff speech, or any other foolish behavior, will, in most places, cause a preacher to be despised.

CHAPTER III

And what is set forth in this division of the letter we are now considering? The duty of Titus in teaching Christians their obligations toward civil governments, in regard to speaking evil, and quarreling, also his duty in regard to being “gentle, showing all meekness unto all men,” is here set forth. This is followed by reference to the kind of life Paul and Titus had lived before they were brought under the influence of the Gospel. Then Paul made mention of the change that was wrought in them by the Gospel, and mentions that which he wished Titus to “affirm constantly,” and what he wished him to avoid. How Titus should treat a “heretic” is next mentioned, and this is followed by certain personal directions, and remarks about “good works.” The letter is ended with a statement of the Apostolic benediction.

of what are we informed in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? Paul's admonition to Titus that he should put Christians in mind to be good citizens in the earthly kingdom, under which they would be required to live, is set forth. But if the earthly kingdom in which Christians live will venture to require of them disobedience to God — then what? The answer to this question is set forth in Acts 5:29. With this exception, all Christians are required to be good citizens, obedient to the commands of civil rulers. Besides, Christians are to show “meekness unto all men,” remembering that they were themselves “foolish, disobedient,” and guilty of various shades of sin before they heard the Gospel. They should show “meekness,” for example's sake, and in order to win the disobedient from their sinful life.

What may we say of the 5th verse of this chapter? It may be justly regarded as an explanation of John 3:5. The expressions “born of water” and “born of the Spirit,” as set forth in John 3:5, are here set forth in the expressions, “washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” These two scriptures should be considered together, and as explaining each other. The expressions “born of water” and “washing of regeneration” must refer to water baptism, even as the expression “bodies washed with pure water,” in Hebrews 10:22, must refer to such baptism, at least in the minds of all who speak as the oracles of God speak. Then the expressions “born of the Spirit” and “renewing of the Holy Ghost” must refer to the work of the Holy Spirit, through the Word, in leading persons to obey Christ, and to the gift of the Spirit of adoption when acceptable obedience has been rendered. See Acts 2:36-38; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6.

But what of the 6th and 7th verses? The 6th verse should be read in connection with John 3:34, by which we learn that Christ was not limited in his reception of the Spirit. Sufficient was given to him for his own preaching and work, also sufficient for him to bestow of the Spirit on the “twelve Apostles,” likewise on the “seventy others,” whom he sent forth to teach and preach and work miracles. Besides, when he ascended into heaven he received the promise of the Father and sent forth the Holy Spirit upon his chosen ones. See Acts 2:33. Then through those chosen ones the Spirit was bestowed upon many others when they obeyed the Gospel. See Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6. Finally, an impartation of the Spirit was given to all who

obeyed the Gospel and became the adopted sons of God. See Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6. The 7th verse of this chapter declares the condition and hope of those who have been adopted into the divine family.

What of the 8th and 9th verses? They indicate Paul's wish concerning the preaching of Titus, and that which Christians should be careful to maintain, and careful to avoid.

What of the 10th and 11th verses? They inform us concerning a "heretic," and the treatment he should receive. The Greek word for "heretic" means "one who creates or fosters factions;" that is, by adoption of matters of choice or preference in opposition to that which is authorized. This being true the heretic in the church is a character who works division by teaching, or doing, that which he chooses, or prefers, to do, but is not authorized by Christ. Such a man should be admonished once, and then again, after which he should be rejected if he will not repent. Who are heretics when considered from a Gospel viewpoint? All are heretics who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine of Christ. This includes all sectarians, and all innovators, together with all hobbyists—all who are unscripturally inclusive, with all who are unscripturally exclusive.

What use may we make of the 13th verse? A lawyer named Zenas is mentioned in that verse with approval, and this indicates that Paul did not think that a lawyer could not be a Christian.

What of the 14th verse? Paul makes mention in it of "good works for necessary uses" in order to accomplish a certain end, namely, in order to avoid being "unfruitful."

What may we say of the entire letter which we have just considered? It is an important addition to the letters that were addressed to Timothy, and should be a part of every preacher's manual, or hand-book. The letters to Timothy and Titus, if carefully studied and observed, by all preachers, will serve to keep them correct in doctrine, and above reproach in life. All heresies in the doctrine, and all scandals in the life, of preachers, have resulted from a failure to observe the teaching recorded in the letters addressed to Timothy and Titus.

PHILEMON

Of what are we informed in this letter? Paul's love for Philemon, also his idea of the service of love, are the chief ideas set forth in this letter. These ideas are set forth in the record here given of Onesimus, who was a servant of Philemon, but had left him and gone to Paul, by whom he had been converted, and was sent back to Philemon to be received as his brother in Christ. In the 8th and 9th verses we find Paul's love for Philemon indicated, while in the 10th verse, and onward to the end of the 14th, we find an indication of Paul's idea of the service of love.

What is recorded in the 8th and 9th verses which especially indicates Paul's love for Philemon? The fact that he said, "Yet, for love's sake I rather beseech thee," when he might have been "bold in Christ to enjoin" him. This indicates the gentleness of love.

And what is found in the 10th verse, and onward to the end of the 14th, which indicates Paul's idea of the service of love? The fact that he sent Onesimus back to Philemon, when he needed him, and might have justly retained him to do him service, in view of all that Philemon owed him, is an indication of Paul's idea of the service of love when we consider the reason that Paul would not retain him. This is clearly indicated in the 13th and 14th verses. In other words, Paul would not accept a service that he was not sure would be "willingly" rendered, and he was not sure that Philemon would "willingly" do without his servant for Paul's sake.

What may we learn by considering Paul's idea in regard to the service of love? It is right, and indicates that which God requires of us. We should love God because he first loved us (I John 4:19), and then all our worship and work should be the service of love. He does not desire even one act of service from us toward him that is not the outgrowth of our love for him. This being true he has commanded, and, in some instances, only indicated by example, or by a record of events, what his will is. Then if we love him as we should, we shall be able to understand his

will. But if we do not love him as we should, then we are liable to think that his will is not clear, or is not binding, and, as a result, many feel justified in slighting it. Thus it is with acts of worship and work quite generally. They are clearly taught for all who love the Lord sincerely, but seem obscure to all others. This is exactly as the Lord intended that it should be, for he does not desire to be approached in prayer, praise, or thanksgiving, nor does he desire that any shall attend to the communion, nor to the contribution, who do not love him supremely. Paul would not accept the service of Onesimus without the assurance that his master, through love, was willing for such service to be rendered. If a man was thus careful about the service of love how much more will God and Christ be careful concerning it? Such is the lesson that we may learn by considering the epistle that was addressed to Philemon. Such service is shown in every family where love prevails, and is the chief charm in such family.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER I

What may we say, in general, concerning the letter we now begin to consider? It was addressed to Christians that had been converted from among the Jews, who were also called Hebrews. In chapter 5:12 we learn that they had gone backward, rather than forward, in their life as Christians, and this explains the general bearing of this letter.

What is the general idea set forth in the 1st chapter? It may be said to consist in the idea that God has spoken to man. Then this idea is enlarged upon, or amplified, or explained, by that -which is said of the fact that God has "in these last days spoken to us by His Son." This is followed by declarations concerning the Son in his greatness. He is declared to be greater than the angels because of his name. God did not speak of any one of the angels, as his Son whom he had begotten, yet he thus spoke of his Son. Then the Son is spoken of as greater than the angels because when he was brought into the world all the angels were commanded to worship him. Next we learn that Christ was greater than the angels because he was spoken of as "God," and that he had a "throne" which should endure "forever," also that he had "a scepter of righteousness," and that he had been "anointed" with "the oil of gladness above" his fellows. Then the Son is spoken of as greater than the material world, for it "shall perish," but he will remain "the same," and his "years shall not fail." Finally, he is again declared to be greater than the angels because Jehovah has said to him, "Sit on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool," while the angels are "all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

What is referred to in the declaration, "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows"? We may learn what is here referred to by considering John 3:34. The Holy Spirit was given to Christ not "by measure," that is, not with limitation. This was not true of any Old Tes-

tament prophet, nor of John the Baptist. But Christ received sufficient of the Spirit to bestow a part of it oil the twelve Apostles whom he sent forth to preach, and to work miracles. Besides, he had sufficient of that Spirit to bestow of it on "other seventy," or seventy others, whom he sent forth. Finally, after his resurrection, he still had some "measure" of the Spirit to bestow. See Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:1-17; John 20:22.

How can Christ who is the Son be called , God" since Jehovah, the Father, is called "God"? In the 8th verse of this chapter Christ is called "God," but this is right even as a son who is a man may be called a man while his father is yet living. The father is a man, and so is the son. On the same principle Jehovah, the Eternal One, is called "God," and so is his eldest Son worthy of being called "God." See the declarations concerning him in the 2nd and 3rd verses of this chapter. He is declared to be the one whom Jehovah "hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds," likewise "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." Then he is declared to be the one who upholds "all things by the word of his power," and that he has "by himself purged our sins," and has "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." In view of all this Jehovah has said to him, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows; and, thou, God, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Jehovah used Christ as "the Word" in creating this world. See John 1:1-3,14; Colossians 1:15-17.

CHAPTER II

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of a continuance of Paul's argument in favor of Christ as the one to whom, above all others, we should give heed. He is not only greater than the angels, whose word was steadfast, but God has promised to "put in subjection" to him "the world to come." Yet we are informed

that he was made lower than the angels in one respect, namely, "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." This is followed by statements which set forth the reasons that Christ was made subject to death.

What may we learn by considering the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th verses of this chapter? We may learn, first of all, that the words that were spoken by angels, in the Old Testament periods, were steadfast, and that in view of this we, who live in the Gospel Age, ought to give earnest heed to the words of Christ. We may learn, also, that we are in danger of letting them slip, or leak out of our minds, and that, on this account, likewise, we should give earnest heed to the words of Christ.

What is referred to by the expression "the world to come," as recorded in the 5th verse? In Matthew 28:18 we are informed that "all power in heaven and in earth" was given to Christ, and in Ephesians 1:22 we learn that God "gave him to be head over all things to the church." These scriptures indicate that because Christ obeyed the Father in all things he had been highly exalted in the heavens, as we may learn by considering Philippians 2:5-10.

What is indicated in the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th verses taken together? The indication is that the quotations from David's writings, as recorded in the 6th, 7th and 8th verses, are of double reference. Their first reference is to Adam. See Genesis 1:26-28. But we are here informed that the dominion given to Adam, referred also to Christ who is a son of Adam according to the flesh. Because of Christ's relation to Adam he had the right to have dominion over all the lower orders of creation, and over the earth. But, in addition to this, God proposed to give to him greater dominion than he did to Adam. This greater dominion is mentioned in the 5th verse, and the reason for it is mentioned in the 9th verse. God proposed to put in subjection to Christ things in heaven, because he consented to be made "a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death."

What may we say of the 10th verse? In it we find a statement of one of God's reasons for making Christ subject to death. That reason was "to make him perfect through sufferings," perfect for the position of our high priest. Another reason was that he might deprive the devil of his power, and death of 'its terror. See verses 14 and 15.

What of the 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th verses? They indicate the close relationship between Christ and his followers. They are all of one Father, and "he is not ashamed to call them brethren." See Matthew 28:10. He became numbered with us by taking upon himself a body of flesh and blood, in order to benefit us by overcoming the devil and the grave. This is strikingly set forth in the 14th verse.

In what sense did Christ "destroy" the devil? The Greek word here translated "destroy" means also "to render useless, or unproductive; occupy unprofitably," and then to "render powerless," and, finally, "to free from, dissever from." These shades of meaning show that the word "destroy" is not the best translation in this instance. The devil is not yet destroyed, and never will be utterly destroyed, or annihilated. The best translation is this: "that through death he might separate from him that had the Power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Before Christ had been raised from the dead, the resurrection to die no more had been promised, but not shown forth, or' demonstrated.

What may we learn by considering the 17th and 18th verses? In them is set forth the concluding reason that Christ took upon himself the form of man, and became subject to death, as set forth in this chapter. This reason is that he might be perfected for the priesthood, but it does not refer to the atonement, or satisfaction, that he made for sin. See chapter 9:14, 15; also Romans 5:9. The death of Christ was necessary in order to atone for man's sins, by making satisfaction for them, also that he might, by sufferings, be perfected for the priesthood, and, finally, in order to break down in man's mind and heart the enmity toward God which sin had made, so that he might be reconciled to God. This last reason is mentioned in Colossians 1:21, and indicates that, in order for mankind to be saved, they must cease to be "alienated and enemies" in their "minds by wicked works." The death of Christ was necessary, and needs to be considered, in order, that the alienation and enmity caused by wicked works may be broken down and destroyed.

CHAPTER III

Of what do we read in this chapter? We here read of Christ as our Apostle and High Priest, and of his faith

fulness, also of Moses and his faithfulness. We read next that Christ, as a Son, is greater than Moses was as a servant. This is followed by an exhortation in favor of faithfulness, and against hardening the heart, in connection with which is an argument to the effect that as Christ is greater than Moses was so Christians should be better than the Jews were. The chapter is ended with warnings based on the divine judgments upon the Jews which were inflicted because of their unbelief.

What may we learn by considering the 3rd verse of this chapter? We may learn that Moses existed by reason of Christ, or that if God had not purposed to bring Christ into this world Moses would not have existed. We may learn also that the Jewish house, or nation, over which Moses presided by the law given through him would not have existed if God had not foreordained that the Church, or house of God, which consists of Christians, should be established. Finally, we may learn that a house should be named after its builder, and owner, rather than after the material of which it is built. This is indicated by the declaration that "he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. , But if we name a house according to the material of which it is composed we honor the material more than the builder and owner. In view of this we can understand why the Church which is composed of disciples or Christians is not called, and should not be called, Disciple church, nor Christian church, but should be called Church of Christ or Church of God. The Lord knew what names His Church should have, and we should not try to improve on the names he has given to it.

What may we say of the 4th, 5th and 6th verses? The 4th declares that God is supreme as the builder, the 5th declares that Moses was "faithful" over the Jewish house or church, "as a servant" and "for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." Then in the 6th verse Christ is mentioned in contrast with Moses, for he is declared to be "a son" and this implies that he was not "a servant" as Moses was. Besides, Paul here declares that Christians are the "house of Christ" if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm "unto the end." This means that Christians are worthy of being called Christ's "house" in proportion as they remain steadfast in his teaching.

'What is next offered for our consideration? In the 7th verse Paul began an exhortation, which is followed by admonitions and warnings throughout the remainder of the

chapter. The bearing of that which he here sets forth is that many of the Israelites in the wilderness were guilty of "unbelief," and hardness of heart, by reason of which they were overthrown, and, therefore, failed to enter the land of Canaan, which was the land of promised rest to them. On the basis of this, as a fact, Paul exhorted and warned the Christians whom he addressed, in the letter under consideration, against hardening their hearts, or allowing themselves to be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. The argument in the entire chapter is this: As Christ is greater than Moses, therefore the house of Christ should be better than the house of Moses, or Christians should be better than the Israelites, generally, were in the wilderness.

What may we say of the expression, "deceitfulness of sin," as recorded in the last of the 13th verse? It is very expressive, and deserves to be considered with care. , Satan is a flatterer, and "is transformed into an angel of light." See 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. That is to say, he can thus transform himself when it suits his purpose to do so. Besides, "his ministers" are also transformed as the "ministers of righteousness." Their most successful methods of approach to mankind are by flattery and offers of compromise. Satan used flattery when he approached our mother Eve. See Genesis 3:1-6. Pharaoh offered compromise when he found that he and his people were afflicted with plagues. See Exodus 8:25-28; 10:7-11, 24. He first declared that he would not obey the Lord, and would not let Israel go. See Exodus 5:2. But at a later date he proposed that they should "sacrifice" "in the land" of Egypt, and still later he consented to let them go into the wilderness, but said, "Ye shall not go very far away." When this would not satisfy Moses, and he was further afflicted, he said, that those who were "men" should go, but should not take their "little ones" with them. Finally, he told them to go and take their little ones with them, but they should leave their flocks and herds behind. But when all of his compromises were rejected, and the firstborn of Egypt were slain, then Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron, "Go, serve the Lord as ye have said; also take your flocks and herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also." See Exodus 12:31, 32. Here is a lesson for Bible readers. The Lord did not accept any of the compromising offers made by Pharaoh, and we should not accept any of the offers of compromise which Satan makes to us. Besides, we should be constantly on our guard against the deceitfulness of sin, as it is manifested by its

insidiousness, or gradual advancement. The thief, perhaps, began by stealing a pin; the drunkard began by a drink of cider; the gambler began by a game of cards for amusement, the opium fiend began by a dose of opium to relieve pain, and thus with all other forms of sin. Last of all, the churches of Christ in the 1st Century began their downward course by adoption of a little of Jewish practices and of heathen philosophy, while many of the churches of Christ in the 19th Century began their downward course by the adoption of a religio-secular college, and with pompous titles of secular colleges, and with the organization of an extra body to instruct children in the Bible on the first day of the week. Thus it has been; thus it is; and thus it will be till the end of time. Satan is the arch-enemy of mankind. By flattery he deceived our mother Eve, and brought sin into the world. By flattery and offer of compromise he has been successful in deceiving myriads of mother Eve's sons and daughters. He approached Eve through a serpent, but he does not now need to use a serpent as his mouthpiece. Preachers, of many kinds, are now ready to proclaim his flatteries, and offer his compromises. Besides preachers, there are multitudes of lecturers and educators, of various shades and grades, who will do the same. Then the editors of secular, and religio-secular, newspapers, are quite, generally, disposed to be flatterers and compromisers. Last, but not least, are the hosts of writers and publishers of ungodly fiction. These, and the preachers of false religious doctrines, are the most insidious and most successful of Satan's agents.

CHAPTER IV

What may we, as Bible readers, learn by considering the chapter now before us? We may learn that Paul here wrote concerning "rest"—the two-fold rest which God offered to the Israelites, and the two-fold rest which he offers to mankind in the Gospel Age. The importance of striving for the rest that is now offered is enforced by reference to God's word and all-seeing power, also to Christ, as the high priest for Christians, who is able to help them at all times of need.

What was the two-fold "rest" which God offered to the Israelites? First, he offered to them the Sabbath, which means "rest." This was a weekly rest which they were required to observe every seventh day. See Exodus 20:8-12. Next they were to have "rest" from all their ene-

mies when they would be settled in the land of Canaan. See Deuteronomy 3:20; 12:10; 25:19; Joshua 1:13-15; 22:4; 23:1. The men of war—men able to bear arms who came out of Egypt in the host of Israel, with two exceptions, fell in the wilderness. Thus they failed to enter into the "rest" which God had promised to them if they would be obedient to him. The fact that they fell through disobedience resulting from their unbelief is mentioned by Paul as a warning for Christians. They were all partakers, in some measure, of the rest required in observing the sabbath, yet the disobedient ones failed to enter the final rest for the Israelites as a nation.

But what of the two-fold "rest" for mankind in the Gospel Age? This is referred to in the first of the 3rd verse, also in the 7th verse and onward to the end of the 11th. In the 3rd verse reference is made to the soul-rest which is offered to all obedient believers even in this life. See Matthew 11:28-30. But in the 9th and 11th verses of this chapter we find reference to "a rest" that "remaineth" to the people of God, and Christians are exhorted to "labor therefore to enter into that rest." This "rest" is referred to in Revelation 14:13. The Jews had a sabbath, or rest, in the wilderness, every week, yet were on trial with reference to the rest which was before them in the land of Canaan. Christians have a soul-rest in this world, also a rest from the extremes and extravagances occasioned by sin, yet while they remain in this world they are on trial with reference to the promised rest in Paradise.

What may we say of the name "Jesus" in the 8th verse of the Common Version of this chapter? That name should have been Joshua, for Joshua, in the Hebrew, means "savior" and the same is true of the name Jesus in the Greek. This being true, the translators should, in this instance, have considered the fact that Joshua led the Israelites into the land of Canaan, and should, therefore, have made use of the name "Joshua," instead of the name "Jesus." By so doing they would have shown regard for sense, and would have avoided confusing the ordinary reader.

Is there anything in the 10th verse that should be especially considered? Yes. God "ceased" from His works when he entered into his sabbath or "rest," and all who obey the gospel of Christ cease from their "own works," when they thus obey. When the Israelites had made a calf at Mount Sinai, and worshiped it, they "rejoiced in the works of their own hands," and while mankind are now

in sin, worshiping the God of this world, they rejoice in their own works, or devices. But when they obey the Gospel they cease from their "own works " or devices. This is severe on religious innovators. They do not "cease" from their , own works," or devices. Woe unto them!

What may we learn by considering the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? We may learn that the fact that "the word of God is quick [living] and powerful" is mentioned as an argument in favor of all Christians striving to enter into the final rest that is offered to them. Then the fact that God, who is the author of His word, has all-seeing power is another argument that is offered to induce Christians to labor to "enter into 'His rest."

What of the 14th, 15th and 16th verses of this chapter? In them is set forth another argument intended to induce Christians to "labor" to "enter into" the final rest for the redeemed, and thus "hold fast our profession." This argument consists of the fact that "we have a great high priest I that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." It consists also of the assurance that Jesus can "be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," having been "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." This argument is followed by the exhortation that we should "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

CHAPTER V

What is here set forth for Bible readers to learn? Mention of the Jewish high priest, and then of Christ as our "high priest" is first made for our learning. Then we find mention made of that which Christ suffered while on earth, and the end which was accomplished by his sufferings. Mention is next made of a high priest named Melchisedec, and this is followed by the statement that those whom Paul addressed had gone backward, rather than forward, in their knowledge of the word of God. The chapter is ended with an explanation of the difference between a religious "babe" and one who is "of full age."

What may we learn by considering the first part of this chapter? The need for a high priest, in the Jewish Age, to be "ordained for men," and to be "called of God," is here offered for our learning, also the need for such high priest to "have compassion on the ignorant," and consider that he was himself also "encompassed with infirmity." Then the fact that Christ did not glorify himself to be our

high priest is mentioned, and this is followed by the statement that God spoke of him as his "Son," and then as a "high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."

What may we learn by considering the 7th, 8th and 9th verses of this chapter? We may learn that Christ was in deep distress while he was on earth—such distress that he "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears" unto God the Father. We may also learn that his sufferings were necessary in order to make him perfect—give him the perfect experience of a man in suffering—and thereby enable him to become "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." This indicates that, by his sufferings, he was made perfect in his experience for the priesthood.

What of the 12th, 13th and 14th verses? In them we are informed concerning the spiritual condition of the Hebrew brethren whom Paul addressed in this letter. By this information we learn that those brethren had gone backward, rather than forward, in their knowledge of the truth. As a result they needed all that Paul wrote to them in the former part of this letter, and in view of their condition we can understand the appropriateness of all that he set before them. Besides, we can understand that all who are in a similar condition need the same kind of teaching.

CHAPTER VI

Of what may we read in this chapter? We may first read that Paul exhorted those whom he addressed to leave the first principles, or beginning, of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection, stating the result of not doing so, and declaring the condition of those who would fall away. The condition of such is illustrated by reference to ground or earth that brings forth "thorns and briars." After this illustration Paul declared his confidence in the Hebrew brethren, and made mention of the "strong consolation" which they should have, and the reason for such consolation.

In what sense did Paul mean for those whom he addressed to leave "the principles of the doctrine of Christ"? The Greek word here translated "leaving" means "to send away, suffer to depart; to emit, send forth; to omit, pass over or by, neglect, care not; to permit, suffer, let, to relax, suffer to become less intense." These are not all the shades of meaning of that word, but they are sufficient to enable us to understand that the last of them is the one which

sets forth the idea which Paul wished to convey in the first part of the 1st verse of this chapter. He did not desire the brethren whom he addressed to abandon, discard, nor renounce, the principles of the doctrine of Christ, but only to "relax" with reference to them, or hold to them with less intensesness, and "go on unto perfection." The Greek word here translated "principles" is the same that is translated "beginning" in Mark 1:1, and is translated "first principles", in chapter 5:12. It means, a beginning of both time and things. See also Philippians 4:15, and 1 John I, 1, in which scriptures the same Greek word refers to the Introduction of the Gospel, or that which pertained to its Introduction. This being true, Paul here exhorted the Hebrew brethren to relax with reference to the beginning "of the doctrine of Christ," and to "go on unto perfection."

But what are "dead works," as mentioned in the latter part of the verse under consideration? In the 2nd chapter of James we learn that "faith without works is dead," and this implies that works without faith are dead also. See Hebrews 11:6. This being true we can understand that all religious works that are performed without faith, because they are not authorized by the testimony that produces faith, are "dead works." The "dead works" referred to by the Apostle Paul, in this instance, were those Jewish practices which did not pertain to salvation, and should not have been attended to in order to salvation.

Why is "repentance" here mentioned before "faith toward God"? Repentance and faith are thus mentioned in Mark 1:15. The Jews had committed sins against God under the law, and needed to "repent" of those sins and then "believe the gospel."

What was referred to by the expression "doctrine of baptisms", found in the 2nd verse? In Matthew 3, 11 we find three baptisms spoken of, and they pertain to "the beginning of the gospel of Christ," as mentioned in Mark 1:1.

Then the "laying on of hands" is mentioned in Mark 6:5; Luke 4-40; 13:13. The doctrine of the "resurrection" is mentioned in John 5:28,29, and in Matthew 22:29-31. Finally, in Matthew 25:41-46 we read of "eternal judgment."

In view of all this, what should we say to those who teach that the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter refer to certain Old Testament practices? We should inform them that Mark certainly knew what the beginning of the gos-

pel of Christ is, and that if either the words of the original text, or the connection in which those words are found, is to be regarded in considering a translation and its meaning, then Paul did not refer to any Old Testament practices when he wrote the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter, except when he wrote of "dead works." But some one, may ask, Why did Paul say that those Hebrew brethren whom he addressed had need that some one should teach them again what are "the first principles of the oracles of God" if they should only relax with reference to them? The answer is found in the condition of all disciples who stop with their baptism and fail to go onward in the new life by studying the Scriptures and attending to all their duties. They hold to baptism so intensely that they show that they do not know its full meaning, and they need to be taught that it means a resurrection to "newness of life," and not simply a, burial of their old life of sin. A full statement of Paul's teaching, in these instances, then, is this: Therefore, relaxing, or holding with less intensesness, the beginning of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not by doing dead works-works without faith -laying again the foundation of repentance or reason for instruction concerning repentance, and of faith toward God, and of the doctrine of the several baptisms, which were preached by John and others before the Gospel was fully introduced, and of the laying on of hands which was practiced in that period, and of the resurrection which was then taught, and of the eternal judgment which was then taught.

What may we learn by considering the 4th verse and onward to the end of the 8th verse? In these verses we find mention made of the results of not heeding the exhortation recorded in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter. The danger of falling away from the faith, and denying Christ, is here mentioned, also the impossibility of renewing to repentance those who would thus fall away. Does the expression "fall away," as here used, refer to common backsliders? The Greek word here translated means "to fall by the side of; to fall away from, to make defection from." In view of this we can see that the mentioned word, in this connection, must refer to doctrine rather than to life, and thus must refer to the one who denies the faith rather than to one who errs in practice. The, apostate is one who denies the divinity of Christ, or the value of his gospel, while the backslider is one who simply errs in life., or practice, but still admits the doctrine of

Christ to be true. The apostate's condition is referred to in the 8th verse, and the implication is that his condition that receives the rain, and yet brings is like the earth forth "thorns and briars."

What do we learn in the 9th verse, and onward to the end of the 12th? We learn that Paul was "persuaded better things" of those whom he addressed, and as evidence he mentioned that God would not forget their "work and labor of love." Then he declared his "desire that every One" of them would "show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." This is followed by a further expression of his desire which was to the effect that they should "be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

And what may we say of the 13th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? We are here informed concerning the certainty of the foundation of the Christian's hope by the assurance that God confirmed his promise with reference to Christ by an oath, also that he swore by himself because he was the greatest one in the universe. Such an oath was made in order to make an end of all controversy, to banish all doubt, and to produce in all believers the assurance of unmodified certainty' in order that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hopes set before us." Imagination cannot go farther; the domain of assurance is fully encompassed; the possibility of evidence is exhausted; the depths of divine benevolence are unfolded, All this was done because God was "willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel," in order that we might have a hope "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." What effect should all these considerations have on all Bible readers? The effect should be to impress them that they are certainly worth saving, also that they cannot be saved except by faith, and that God has given every possible evidence that is necessary to produce faith in them, even unwavering, constant, wholehearted faith. This is the end which God has in view in all the evidences that he has given of himself in the entire domain of nature, in his special providence , and in all that pertains to the plan of salvation as he has revealed it in both the Old Testament and the New. Those who will not consider such, evidences until wholehearted faith is produced in them will fall under the sentence, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." Besides, they are like the Jews who were guilty of "contradicting and blasphem-

ing," and thereby "judged" themselves "unworthy of everlasting life." See Acts 13:45, 46. All who belong to that class will certainly be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." (2 Thessalonians 1:9.)

CHAPTER VII

What may we, as Bible readers, learn by considering this chapter? We may learn that Paul endorsed and defined the names "Melchisedec" and "King of Salem," and then proceeded to give a further description of Melchisedec so as to inform us who he was and is. We may next learn of the difference between the "Levitical priesthood" and that of "Melchisedec," also of the relation between the priesthood and the law, and then of the perfection of Christ's priesthood, and its superiority over the priesthood which was made by the law.

Who was Melchisedec? This question is often asked. A better question would be, Who is he? The answer in the last of the 3rd verse of this chapter is, that he is the one who "abideth a priest continually," and in the 8th it is declared "that he liveth." Then in the 24th verse Paul, in writing of Jesus, declares, "But this man because he continueth ever hath an unchangeable priesthood," and in the 25th verse he declares of Christ that "he ever liveth." These several declarations, when taken together, clearly show that Melchisedec and Christ are the same person. But this is only the beginning of evidence on this question. Melchisedec appeared to Abraham as "the priest of the most high God." See Genesis 14:18. But Abraham was a priest, and so were all other men who were believers in God in the Patriarchal Age. Every man was then a priest for himself, and for his family if he had one. Besides, Abraham was the greatest man of the Patriarchal Age, both in faith, and divine promises, of whom the Sacred Text informs us. Yet Melchisedec was greater and "better" than was Abraham, and blessed him. Nor is this all. His names mean "king of righteousness" and "king of peace." Besides, he met Abraham with "bread and wine." Now, we have prepared several questions:

1. Who is worthy of being called "king of, righteousness," besides God, the Father? (Hebrews 1:8, 9.)

2. Who besides God, the Father, is worthy of being called "king of peace"? (Isaiah 9:6.)

3. Who now meets the faithful with "bread and wine"? (Matthew 26:26-29.)

4. Who is greater and "better" than Abraham or any other mere man that ever was on earth? (Matthew 28-.18; 1 Peter 2:21-23.)

5. Who is he that, in the priesthood, is "without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life"! See 14th and 15th verses of this chapter.

6. Who is he that "abideth a priest continually," and "of whom it is witnessed that he liveth," and who "hath an unchangeable priesthood"? See -verses 3rd, 8th and 24th.

7. What is the force of the expression "like unto" in the 3rd verse of this chapter, and in the 13th verse of the 1st chapter of Revelation?

The correct answer to any one of the foregoing inquiries will show that Jesus, in human form, met with Abraham, the earthly father of the faithful, "with bread and wine," and "blessed him," even as he met with his disciples on the night of his betrayal with bread and wine, and blessed them. As an illustration' see Daniel 3:25. Besides, in Genesis 18:1, 22-33 is another illustration of an appearance of the Lord, in human form, to Abraham. Finally, who is "the Lord," but "the king of righteousness" and "the king of peace"?

What is the bearing of all that is set forth in this chapter concerning the priesthood of Melchisedec? The bearing is that it existed in the days of Abraham, before the "Levitical priesthood" was raised up, and that it was greater and better than the priesthood of the sons of Levi, likewise that the same "order" of priesthood has existed since the law has been fulfilled. This is like unto Paul's argument concerning faith, as set forth in his letter to the Romans, also to the Galatians. In both of those letters he declares that faith existed before the law, and that Abraham was justified by it; therefore, it is acceptable to God without the deeds of the law. On the same principle of reasoning

Paul here declares that the priesthood of Melchisedec, existed before the "Levitical priesthood" and was acceptable to God; therefore it is acceptable to God since the priesthood of Levi has been ended.

What may we learn by considering the 12th verse? This verse clearly indicates when the Jewish law was entirely fulfilled, and when "the law of the Spirit"—the Gospel began to be in full force. As a result , all doubt that the Jewish law was in force after Christ's death, and during

his time on earth after his resurrection, likewise during the period that passed between his ascension and the descent of the Spirit according to his promise, should be banished. Not until the priesthood was changed was the law changed, and in Acts 2:33 the apostle clearly indicates that the change of the priesthood was established when Jesus had "received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit," so that he might send the Spirit upon his disciples. As we are not informed of that which was necessary to be accomplished in heaven between the ascension of Christ and the descent of the Spirit, we should not speculate. On the contrary, we should be satisfied that the priesthood was not fully changed till we have evidence of it on the day of Pentecost mentioned in the 2nd chapter of Acts. The change of the priesthood made the change of law necessary, and when the law was changed we are assured that the priesthood changed at that time.

What is indicated in the 13th and 14th verses? The indication in them is that Jesus was not of the right tribe to be a priest on earth, and, therefore, all those who say that he was baptized in order to be consecrated to the Jewish priesthood are guilty of a two-fold error. They err in assuming that Jesus could be a priest on earth, and in assuming that he was baptized to consecrate him to the priesthood.

What may we say of the 15th verse, and onward to the end of this chapter? It is a series of plain statements in which the superiority of Christ's priesthood over that of the Jewish law is set forth.

CHAPTER VIII

What is set forth in this chapter? The "sum," or summing up, of that which Paul had previously declared concerning the priesthood of Christ as different from, and better than, the Levitical priesthood, or the priesthood which was ordained by the law, we find set forth in this chapter. This summing up which is here recorded mentions a prominent difference between the Jewish tabernacle and the Church of Christ, also the chief differences between the old covenant and the new.

What is indicated in the 2nd verse? The indication here is that Christ, as our "high priest," is "a minister" of the Church which he established, and which is here declared to be "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." What effect should this declaration have on all

those who are members of churches not mentioned in the Bible? They should become alarmed because those churches are tabernacles which man pitched, and not the Lord. Therefore Christ is not "a minister" of them, and the danger is that not one of them is recognized in heaven. They are all on the outside of "the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man." In regard to origin, they are not even on an equality with the tabernacle in the wilderness, for Moses pitched that one according to divine directions—"according to the pattern" which God had shown to him in the mount. But all churches that originated with men are tabernacles which man pitched, and not the Lord. This should fill all members of such churches with fear, and dread, and consternation, and terror.

What may we say of the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses? They all refer to the priesthood, the sacrifices, and tabernacle, of the Jews. And what of the 6th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? Mention is made in the 6th verse of "a better covenant, which was established upon better promises," than was the covenant with the Jews. In the remainder of the chapter the "better covenant," with its advantages, is described.

What is the meaning of the word "covenant"? It means an agreement. What is the difference between the words "covenant" and "testament"? While the word "covenant" means an agreement, the word "testament" means an expression of will. God expressed his will to his ancient people as a covenant, and when they agreed to do his will, as is mentioned in Exodus 19:8, they entered into covenant relation with him. To this covenant Paul refers in the 9th verse of this chapter, and declares that the Jews "continued not in" that covenant. In view of this, and for other reasons, God proposed to "make a new covenant with" his people.

What did God promise should be the special differences between the "new covenant" people and those of the "old covenant"? In the new covenant the divine laws should be put "into their minds," and written "in their hearts," and they should all know the Lord "from the least to the greatest," likewise their sins should not, as in the old covenant, be remembered, even after they had been forgiven. But how did the Lord propose to put his laws into the minds, and write them in the hearts of all the new covenant people? He proposed to do this by showing to them, in his own record, the babe of Bethlehem, the child Jesus,

the man of Nazareth, the Son of God, the Man of Sorrows, the Perfect Exemplar, the Atoning Sacrifice, the Risen and Exalted Redeemer. The new covenant record is such as will captivate the mind, and win the heart, of every one who will read it aright. By this plan God proposed to "put" his laws into the minds of the new covenant people, and "write" them in their hearts. When any one has captivated our minds and won our hearts, then that one's laws are in our minds and hearts. But in addition to this the Lord proposed to put his laws into the minds and write them in the hearts of the Apostles by the Holy Spirit that he gave to them, likewise to many others, in a less degree, who became members of the new covenant people in the 1st Century of the Gospel Age.

CHAPTER IX

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed of the tabernacle which pertained to the "first" or "old" covenant, and mention is made of its furniture, also of certain official acts of the priests, and of the high priest. Next we are informed of the meaning or signification of a certain act of the "high priest" under the old covenant. This is followed by reference to Christ, as our "high priest," likewise to the difference between his offering and certain offerings made under the Jewish law. Christ is then mentioned, as "the mediator of the New Testament," and the bearing of his death is stated. This is followed by a discussion of a testament, and when it is in force, also of the ceremonies which Moses attended to in "the first testament" in dedicating it, and of the "heavenly things" to which those ceremonies referred. The chapter is ended with a reference to man's death, and the judgment of him, which will follow. This is referred to as an illustration of the fact that Christ "was once offered to bear the sins of many," and the fact that "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

What should we say of that which Paul declares concerning the position of the several items of furniture in the tabernacle? We should admit that he knew more about it than we do, and thus admit that "the golden censer," or "golden altar of incense," was in the "holiest of all," or "most holy place" of the tabernacle. But is it not possible to prove by the writings of Moses that the altar of incense was in "the holy place," and not in "the most holy"? No; and any attempt to bring evidence to prove such a prop-

osition is an attempt to set scripture against scripture, and to prove that Paul wrote incorrectly in the 4th verse of this chapter. But some one may ask whether "the golden censer" mentioned in that verse might not have been something else than "the golden altar of incense." In response to such a question we may ask, Why did Paul omit all other mention of that "golden altar"? Moreover, "the most holy place" typified heaven, and in Revelation 8:3 we learn that John, in his vision of heaven, saw "the golden altar which was before the throne." This corresponds with Exodus 40:5, "And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony." The ark, where the oracles of God were, and where God promised to speak to the high priest, represented the throne of God on earth, and "the altar of gold for the incense" was to be set "before the ark." Then Paul declared that "the golden censer" was "in the holiest of all," and John declares that in his vision of heaven he saw "the golden altar which was before the throne." Thus it is written, and thus it remains, unchanged and unchangeable, in "the word of God which liveth and abideth forever," and which is "forever settled in heaven," and settled by Him "with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning."

But what shall we say of the 7th verse? It informs us that "the high priest alone once every year" went with blood "which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." Does this mean that the high priest went into the most holy place once only every year? No. It means only that he went alone into that place once a year for a special purpose, and does not intimate that he never went into it at any other time. In Exodus 30:10, and Leviticus 16:2, 11, 12, 15, 34, we learn that he went into the most holy place with blood once a year on the day of atonement. In Exodus 30:1-10 we learn that Aaron, the high priest, was to burn incense on the golden altar every morning, and every evening, and that he should "make an atonement upon the horns of it once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements." And Paul tells us that the golden altar was "in the holiest of all." This is the end of controversy with all who do not pretend to know more than Paul did about the Jewish tabernacle, and who will not try to set Moses and Paul against each other in order to sustain a theory of their own.

What may we say of the 8th verse, and onward to the end of the 12th? In these verses Paul referred to "the first tabernacle," "which was a figure" of a "greater and more

perfect tabernacle," as it now exists in the Church as one part, and in heaven as the other part.

What of the 13th and 14th verses? In them Paul mentions the blood of animals that was offered under the Jewish law, and he mentions also the blood of Christ. In those verses, Paul contrasts the efficacy, or saving power, of Christ's blood with the blood of animals that was offered under the law.

What may we learn by considering the 15th verse and onward to the end of the 20th? We may learn of Paul's mention of Christ as "the mediator of the New Testament," and of his discussion of "a testament," when it is not in force, and when it is in force, and the relation of blood to the Old Testament. In the 18th verse, also the 19th and 20th, he clearly sets forth that the Old Testament was "dedicated" by the sprinkling of blood and water.

In view of the 19th and 21st verses, what may we say of those who declare that "it is impossible to sprinkle persons, since the word sprinkle means to disperse in small quantities"? We may say that they "do err, not knowing the Scriptures." Paul here declares that Moses sprinkled both "the book and all the people," also "the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the sanctuary."

What of the 22nd verse? The declaration that "without shedding of blood is no remission" is true because death is the penalty for sin, and, therefore, whenever man has sinned he has forfeited his right to live, and has deserved to die. But God's mercy has been extended in his behalf, and the death of animals was first required as a substitute, until Christ came, and made the final satisfaction for sin by his own death. The remainder of this chapter is a plain record of Christ as our atoning sacrifice, whose offering of himself is the final satisfaction for sins.

What should we say to those who pronounce the doctrine of the atonement a mystery, and, on account of its mysterious character, are not disposed to accept it? We should inform them that the words "vegetation," and "digestion," with many others, are but names for mysteries as great as that signified by the word "atonement." We should also inform them that the bread we eat means the death of the grain of which it is composed, also that the meat we eat means the death of the animals on which it was formed, and that thus it is with all other foods. Then we should inform them that if God ordained that our animal life should be sustained daily by the death of innocent vic-

tims, and we accept it without complaining, certainly we should not draw back when informed that God ordained that we may have spiritual life by the death of an innocent victim who died to make satisfaction for our sins. On the contrary, we should be filled with gratitude and love toward him for his compassion on us, and toward Christ because he consented to suffer that we might live. The end that God had in view when he created man and suffered him to sin, and then arranged a plan of salvation for him, was to accomplish the end mentioned in 1 John 4:19. God desired beings in his own image, who would love him because he first loved them, and all that the Bible reveals in regard to God's dealings with man has this end in view. A wise and good man will enter into the marriage relation in order to rear a family of children, and will expose his children to trial and temptation. If they sin he will be kind to them, and will try to convince them that he is their best friend. When they learn to love him because he first loved them, then the end which the father has in view will be accomplished. Thus it has been, thus it is, and thus it will be, in God's dealings with mankind.

CHAPTER X

Of what are we informed in this chapter? First of all, we are informed that the law had a "shadow," and could not make those "perfect" who kept it, but that Christ came to take away the law that he might establish the Gospel, and sanctify those who would accept it. We are informed next of the difference in value between the daily offerings of Jewish priests and the one offering which Christ made. Then we find a reference to the new covenant and its advantages, also of the "boldness" which Christians should feel in approaching unto heaven by "a new and living way" which Christ has "consecrated for us." The remainder of the chapter sets forth exhortations and warnings, and a reference to the Jewish law as a basis for warnings, also a reference to the early devotion of the Hebrew Christians as a basis for more exhortations and warnings.

What is indicated in the first part of this chapter? The 1st verse may be regarded as an explanation of John 1:17. The law was not opposed to truth, but was a shadow of the truth, or substance, which was given by Christ. This verse should always have been sufficient to save Bible readers from resorting to any part of the law as necessary to salvation, or as a foundation for any necessary practice.

Why should any one resort to "a shadow" when the sub. stance is at hand, or to a picture when the one whom it represents is at hand? The weakness of the law to save and thus to purge the "conscience of sins," is discussed at length in Paul's writings to the Romans and Galatians, also here in Hebrews. Besides, in 2 Corinthians and 3rd chapter it is pointedly contrasted with the Gospel, and in other letters its efficiency is clearly indicated. Why then will any one try to bind the law, or any part of it, on those who have the Gospel as God's power to save? A charitable answer is, they "do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

Should we conclude by reading the 4th verse of this chapter that sins were not pardoned in the Jewish Age? No. Numbers 14:19,20 forbid such a conclusion. But how could sins be pardoned, in course of the Jewish Age, if the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins? God could pardon sins in view of the promise which he had made concerning Christ just as well as he could order a tabernacle to be built in view of his purposes concerning Christians in the Gospel Age. A promissory note, well secured, is good, for its "face value," between men, and certainly God's promise was well secured. But why was a remembrance made of sins year after year under the law? We may as well ask, Why is a promissory note often renewed year after year? The answer is that the debt is not yet paid, but the note is received as a substitute for payment. The same was true in course of the Jewish Age. The remembrance made of sins each year implied that the debt had not been paid. But while the payment was delayed, the blood of animals was received as a divinely ordained substitute for the death of Christ.

What may we say of the 5th, 6th and 7th verses? In them Christ is represented as addressing the Father concerning the inefficiency, or lack of favor, that was in the sacrifices of the law, and proposing to come to the earth and do the will of God. In what part of "the volume of the book" was anything of this kind written concerning Christ before David wrote of it in the 40th Psalm? In Deuteronomy 18:15-18 we find that which has a bearing in this direction. This becomes evident as we consider the last part of the 9th verse. In Deuteronomy 18:15-18 we read of the promise that God made concerning Christ who should receive the divine word, and speak it unto the people faithfully, and here we read of God taking away the "first" law that he might "establish the second." The "first" law, as men-

tioned in this connection, is equal to the "first" covenant, mentioned in chapter 8 , 13, and the "second," as here mentioned, is equal to the "new covenant" mentioned in chapter 8: S. To this same covenant Paul refers in the 16th verse of the chapter now under consideration.

Did Paul mean to indicate, in the 14th verse, that the eternal salvation of all Christians is assured so that they cannot be lost? No. In 1 Corinthians 9:27 Paul implied that he might be lost, even after preaching the Gospel to others, if he did not keep his body under, and bring it into subjection. But in the 14th verse, and onward through the 18th, Paul declared truths which he set forth as a foundation for the conclusion and exhortation which are set forth in the 19th verse, and onward to the end of the 25th.

What is meant by entering "into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," as mentioned in the 19th verse? In that verse Paul declares that Christians have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," and thereby indicates that we may, without fear, approach the throne of God in heaven, pleading the merit of Christ's blood. This approach is declared to be by "a new and living way which he [Jesus] hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." In other words, the fleshly body of Christ, which was nailed to the cross for us, was shadowed, or typified, by the vail in the tabernacle, and in the temple, which separates the most holy place from the holy place. But when Jesus died then that vail was "rent." (Matthew 27:50,51.) And Paul here informs us that by his death on the cross Jesus "consecrated for us" "a new and living way."

What may we say of the 22nd verse? It is a part of an exhortation which Paul based on the statements he had made concerning Christ's provisions for us, and it indicates that Christians should have "a true heart," and "the full assurance of faith." Then the expression, "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," refers to that which is done for obedient believers when they are baptized. (1 Peter 1:2; 3:21). In the Jewish Age the sprinkling of blood, also of blood and water, was necessary in legal cleansings. See chapter 9:19-22. Can the expression, "bodies washed with pure water," have reference to anything except immersion in water? No. Every reference to baptism, in which mention is made of water, has this bearing. What is the force of the expression, "pure water"? The 19th verse of the preceding chapter indicates that reference is here made to water not mixed with blood, in contradistinction from the

water that was mixed with blood in the Jewish cleansings. What is implied in the last of the 23rd verse? The word "faithful," when applied to God, means constancy, as is indicated in 1 Corinthians 10:13. In Psalm 89:34 we find a statement which indicates that God is faithful in the sense of constancy. Mankind are required to be faithful, in the sense of being full of faith, but God is infinite in knowledge, and, therefore, does not need to believe anything. In view of this, his faithfulness can only refer to his constancy. He is "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17.) The constancy of God is here mentioned by Paul as a basis for the exhortation, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

What does the 24th verse require of Christians? It requires that they shall do all that pertains to worship and work so as to stir others in the same direction. True worship is an expression of love for God and Christ, and good works are an expression of love for our fellow mortals. Galatians 6:10 should not be forgotten by Christians, and the 25th verse of this chapter should be observed by them. 1 John 3:17 indicates that our love for God is tested, in some degree, by our conduct toward our brethren who are in need of our help, and certainly the 25th verse of this chapter shows that our love for God is tested by our worship. Those who assemble for worship only when they have a prospect of hearing a sermon, do not show the disposition of true worshipers. They show that they think more of hearing a man speak than of meeting, and communing with, God and Christ. Besides, those who are only disposed to meet and worship when they think many others will be present are not true worshipers. They show that they think more of meeting a crowd than they think of honoring God and Christ by their own faithfulness. True worshipers consider the acts of worship by reason of God and Christ, who gave them, and not by reason of those who will be present to attend to them.

Why is wilful sinning mentioned by Paul in the 26th verse? The only reason, as far as the connection shows, is because forsaking the Lord's table is wilful sinning. Provision is made for a sin of impulse. See Galatians 6:1. But to stay away from the Lord's table through indifference is to "sin wilfully," and for such sin the Lord has not made any provision, and will not make any. He does not intend to make any other offering, nor arrange any other plan of salvation, in man's behalf.

Why do some members of the churches of Christ feel indifferent toward the worship of the church on Lord's day? They are either guilty of wilful sin, or they sin through ignorance, and, in many instances, their ignorance is wilful. Those who are new converts, and have not had time to learn much of their duty, may, in some instances, be excusable. But those who have been connected with the church for a year, or more, and do not understand that they should meet for worship, and prepare themselves, in mind and heart, to enjoy the worship, as often as possible, are not excusable. Times and circumstances, sickness and other hindrances, will often prevent them from assembling with the saints for worship. That is to say, there are lawful reasons for not assembling on the Lord's day, but mere excuses are not reasons, and are not lawful. Those guilty of making them will be lost if they do not repent. The teaching of the 26th verse, and onward to the end of the 31st, clearly indicates this. In these verses we find warnings which should cause all church members to be filled with fear, and even with trembling. The most terrible results, are here mentioned as warnings to prevent professed disciples from becoming religious triflers. They may regard their absence from the Lord's table a small matter, but the Holy Spirit, through Paul, here declares it to be as the sin of treading under foot the Son of God, and of counting, the blood of the covenant, by which they are sanctified, "an unholy thing," and as doing "despite unto the Spirit of grace," or it bears in that direction. This should be sufficient to terrify all who trifle with the regular worship of the church.

What may we say of the 32nd, 33rd and 34th verses? In those verses Paul referred the saints, whom he addressed, to their former record—to their faithfulness soon after they had become Christians. They endured much, and endured it "joyfully." Then, on the basis of that record, he exhorted them not to cast away their "confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." This is followed by a remark concerning their need of patience, and the reward of patience, also by the assurance that Christ will soon come.

What may we learn by considering the 38th and 39th verses of this chapter? They indicate that faith is always necessary in the life of the Christian, and that those who draw back from the testimony which produces faith, or from the obedience of faith, will be lost, for, by so doing, they "draw back unto perdition."

CHAPTER XI

What may we safely say of this chapter? In the 1st verse Paul defines faith, or tells what faith is, and then, in the remainder of the chapter, he shows what faith is by showing what faith accomplished in many persons in the Old Testament periods.

In what sense is faith "the substance of things hoped for"? It is the basis, or foundation, of all hope. When we hope for anything it is future. We do not hope in regard to the past, nor the present, though the word "hope" is often applied, by those who are not careful in speech, to both the past and the present. Yet, in strictness of speech, all that for which we hope is future. See Romans 8:24.

What may we say of the 2nd verse of this chapter? It is a proposition, or statement, which Paul declared, and after proving it he repeated it in the 39th verse.

Does faith reach backward as well as forward? The 3rd verse indicates that the domain of faith embraces everything which we have accepted, or can accept, as true, by reason of testimony of others, whether in the past, the present or the future. It is "the evidence of things not seen," or, rather, the confidence which we have of things that we have not seen, nor become acquainted with by any of our other senses.

Which verse of this chapter indicates the exact idea found in the word "faith"? The 8th verse indicates it. Abraham "went out" of the land of the Chaldees, and into the land of Canaan, "not knowing whither he went." But God knew, and that was sufficient for Abraham. In the declaration, "By faith, Abraham, when he was called" obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went," we find the exact idea of the word "faith," as faith is required of mankind in order to become Christians, live the life of Christians, and die the death of Christians. Those who lack such faith are constantly liable to draw back from the divine commands, and trifle with that which God requires of them. They will say that they "cannot see any use" in obeying certain commands, or "cannot see any harm" in doing certain things that God has never mentioned in his word. All who thus speak and act lack such faith as Abraham had, and are religious triflers. They will learn when beyond the domain of mercy what their trifling means.

What is referred to in the 15th verse? Reference is here made to the Israelites in the former part of their sojourn in

Egypt. If they had been mindful of the land of Canaan they might have returned to it. But under Joseph's care in Egypt they seemed to have forgotten Canaan, and the promise that they should inherit it. In course of time they were enslaved in Egypt, and remained there till God delivered them.

Why is Isaac declared to be Abraham's "Only begotten son"? The record given of Ishmael, as found in Genesis 16th chapter, shows that he was a child of the flesh, and not a child of promise as was Isaac. Abraham's wife became impatient over the Lord's delay in regard to a son, and she induced her husband to accept her servant maid as a second wife. As a result, trouble was introduced into Abraham's family, and a son was born who received the name Ishmael. But when God made up his record Ishmael was ignored, for he was not of God's promise to Abraham. This indicates that when professed Christians become impatient at God's delay, and they adopt plans of their own in order to a show of success, they introduce trouble into God's family, and that which they accomplish will not be divinely recognized. Here is a warning to all who adopt man-made societies for missionary work, or deeds of benevolence, because they are not satisfied with the Church. All the good that they may do in such plans is liable to be rejected in the last day, because it will not have been done according to the Lord's covenant with his people. All such societies to do good are additions to the divine contract, and are unlawful. Besides, they imply that the Lord did not know what would be best to accomplish missionary work, and other good. They presume to be wise above that which is written, and are all in danger of being rejected in the last day.

What is meant by the expression "reproach of Christ," as recorded in the 26th verse? Christ was reproached because of the company that he sometimes kept. He stooped to bless, and on that account was reproached. See Luke 15:1, 2. Moses stooped to bless his brethren, and was reproached. He turned from a royal family, in order to be associated with a nation of slaves, because that nation had the promise of God resting upon it.

What is the force of the expression, "received not the promise," as recorded in the 39th verse? The next verse indicates, especially if we consider it in the light of 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. The redeemed ones of the Patriarchal and Jewish ages have not yet entered into the eternal rest, and will not until Christ will have come again. At the time of

his second coming the redeemed of all ages will all be glorified together.

What should we say to those who ignore the verses now under consideration, and declare that when Christ ascended he took all the redeemed ones of the Patriarchal and Jewish ages with him to heaven? We should say, "Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." We should not suppose that even Enoch and Elijah have gone beyond paradise, which is the "third heaven." (2 Corinthians 12:2-4.)

CHAPTER XII

And what is here set forth for our learning? This chapter may be regarded as a series of exhortations to faithfulness.

Who made up the "cloud of witnesses" mentioned in the 1st verse now before us? The ancient worthies mentioned in the preceding chapter composed that cloud. May we not suppose that the "witnesses" here referred to were angels, or disembodied spirits, watching our conduct? Yes, we may thus suppose, but such supposition would be purely an appeal to imagination. The context does not intimate anything in that direction, but it does mention certain ancient worthies who were faithful to God, and their record is a witness of God's faithfulness to them. By faith they endured to the utmost, and God gave them strength according to their day. Their testimony should encourage us to be faithful at all times, and even to the utmost.

What is referred to by the expression, "every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us"? Reference is made to every hindrance to faithfulness. In Matthew 13:22 we read of "the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" choking the word. And this indicates that when the Christian is likened to one who runs a race he must not be burdened, but must "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset" him, and run with patience the race that is set before him. The sin of unbelief is the chief weakness of mankind, generally, and may have been in the apostle's mind when he wrote the verse before us. Yet the admission must be made that one person's special weakness may be in the temper, another's in the tongue, another's in the appetite, and, thus, while all have a general weakness in lack of faith, yet each one has some special weakness, according to temperament.

What may we say of the 2nd and 3rd verses? In them Paul referred to Christ, and the example of suffering that he set, and exhorted the Hebrew saints to look to that example.

What of the 4th verse, and onward to the end of the 11th? The 4th verse implies that those whom Paul addressed had not suffered the loss of blood in their efforts to be faithful, and then he repeated a certain Old Testament exhortation in regard to chastisement, or correction. This is followed by certain declarations from Paul on the same subject.

Does the Lord ever chastise his people, or suffer them to be afflicted, if they have not done wrong? In 2 Corinthians 12:7 we find an answer to this question. The Lord suffered Paul to be afflicted because he was in danger, and in order to prevent him from committing sin by being exalted above measure. On the same principle a wise father will sometimes give his son extra work to do in order to make him too tired at night to go to an entertainment that will do him harm. The Lord knows the danger to which each Christian will be exposed, and he knows how to treat us all, and even suffer us to be mistreated, in order to keep us from evil. In view of this we should always submit in humility, and patience, to all that the Lord suffers to come upon us.

What may we say of the 12th verse, and on to the end of the 17th? The 12th verse introduces another exhortation, which is followed by a warning, based on the evil conduct of a man named Esau, who disregarded future good for the sake of present pleasure. Christians should disregard present pleasure for the sake of future good.

What of the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st verses? In them the Apostle Paul declares that those whom he addressed had not come to the mount that their fathers had approached in the wilderness, and at which they had received their law, and in connection with that which he here declares he mentions the sanctity of that mount, and the manner in which God's presence was there made known.

And what of the 22nd, 23rd and 24th verses? In them Paul declares' that those whom he addressed had come to another "mount," and to a "city," and to a "company of angels," to "the Church of the First-born," and "to God, the Judge of all," and to "the spirits of just men made perfect," also to Jesus as "mediator of the new covenant," and to "the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." In what sense had those Hebrew Christians come to all that Paul here mentions? In the last of Isaiah 2:3 we find a prophecy concerning Zion, or Sion, which informs us how Christians have come to Mount Sion. Besides, the Church that was established there was "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." In regard to

the "innumerable company of angels" we need not inquire, since the angels are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." (Chapter 1:14.) In view of this, those Christians whom Paul here addressed had come to be of such characters as angels are required to minister for. At the same time those Christians had become members of "the general assembly" of saints who together were "the Church of the First-born," or Church of Christ, regardless of nationality. See Galatians 3:26-28. Then, in Philippians 3:12 we find reference to the perfection mentioned in the expression, "just men made perfect." There were such spirits on earth, also in paradise, though they had not attained to the perfection that will be given when they will receive glorified bodies. Finally, "the blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel," or the blood of Abel when he was slain, is the blood of Christ. Abel's blood cried for vengeance. See Genesis 4:10. But the blood of Christ calls for mercy.

What may we say of the remainder of this chapter? It sets forth exhortations and warnings. In chapter 10:28, 29 we learn that those did not escape who refused Moses, and Paul here refers to Moses as the one who "spoke on earth." Then on the basis of this he warned those whom he addressed against turning away from God, who in these last days has spoken by his Son. (Chapter 1:1, 2.)

What did Paul refer to by the words, "can not be shaken," in the last of the 27th verse? The first part of the 28th verse indicates that he referred to the Church, which Christ said he would build, and against which the gates of hell, or hades, should not prevail. All else will be "shaken" and "moved." All earthly kingdoms and other governments, churches and other human societies, will pass away, also the earth and even the material heavens above us will be shaken and finally pass away. But the Church will endure forever.

CHAPTER XIII

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter? We may learn concerning brotherly love, entertaining strangers, compassion for bondmen, marriage, and those who violate the marriage relation; also concerning covetousness, contentment and God's care, and the assurance which it should give. We may learn also concerning the duty of members of the Church to certain rulers, and that Christ is always the same. Then we find an exhortation to

steadfastness, followed by a reference to the difference between the Christian's "altar" and that of the Jewish priests. Next we find a reference to the Jewish high priest, and then to Christ, the bodies of certain animals that were slain under the law, and the suffering of Christ when he was crucified. This is followed by an exhortation to bear reproach for Christ, as we have not a continuing city here, and to make spiritual sacrifices to God. An exhortation to obey elders is next introduced, also the reason for obeying them. This is followed by an exhortation to pray for Paul, and the reason for such an exhortation. A prayer of Paul is next introduced, and then, with a few additional words, this chapter is ended.

Who among the ancients entertained angels unawares? Abraham and his nephew Lot entertained angels as if they were men. 'See Genesis, 18th and 19th chapters.

What rulers are referred to in the 7th verse? We find an indication in 1 Timothy 5:17. They were the elders of the church.

What is the intention set forth in the 8th and 9th verses? Those verses were intended to teach Christians to be steadfast. As Jesus Christ is always the same, his followers should not be carried about by "divers and strange doctrines," but should be "established with grace," and "not with meats which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

What may we learn by considering the 10th verse, and on. ward to the end of the 13th? We may learn that Paul here referred to the advantage that Christians have over the Jewish priests, and that as the bodies of certain animals that were slain under the law were burned "beyond," or "without the camp," so Jesus suffered in the flesh "without the gate" of Jerusalem. On this is based an exhortation for Christians to go forth unto him "without the camp, bearing his reproach." As he was reproached by not being regarded as worthy to die in the city, so we should be willing to go anywhere in order to bear his reproach. And this we should do because "we have no continuing city here, but seek one to come."

What is the bearing of the word "altar" in the 10th verse of this chapter? In its general bearing it must refer to the privileges and advantages which Christians have over those which the Jewish priests enjoyed, and in its special bearing it must refer to our privileges at the Lord's table. See I Corinthians 10:16-21.

Of what are we informed in the 15th and 16th verses? The information here given is, that we can offer sacrifices to God in the form of "praise," and that we are commanded to do this "continually," and thus daily. We are informed, likewise, that we should "do good and communicate," or contribute, and that God regards such acts, on our part, as "sacrifices" with which he is "well pleased."

What of the 17th verse? In it Paul commands members of the church, generally, to obey their rulers, and that those rulers "watch" for the souls of those under their care as "they that must give account." What would be the result if all elders would watch for all under their care as those who "must give account"? We would, in every congregation, have a better eldership than we now have. In most instances, those who occupy the position of elders do not seem to feel any responsibility for those under their care, but seem as indifferent as they would be about a flock of goats owned by another man, and a thousand miles from them. As a result, such elders are not obeyed, and, in many instances, are barely endured. Churches that are thus afflicted cannot prosper because they are not conducting themselves in harmony with the divine teaching. They are a disgrace to their profession.

What is implied by Paul's request that the brethren he addressed would pray for him? The first implication is, that he felt he needed their prayers; the second is, that their prayers would accomplish good for him, and the third is, that if Paul needed the prayers of the saints, certainly all preachers of Christ now need the prayers of the saints.

What may we say of the 20th and 21st verses? In them Paul set forth a prayer, which may be regarded as a benediction. It is dignified, grand, exalted, and glorious. In human literature mankind are not offered any speech which is worthy of comparison with it.

What is the meaning of the word "salute" as recorded in the 24th verse? The Greek word here translated by the word "salute" means, "to greet, welcome, express one's good wishes, pay one's respects." These are its primary meanings, and it indicates that Christians are required to treat the elders, and all other Christians, with respect.

What may we say of Paul's letter to the Hebrews, as a document? It begins with the dignified declaration that God has spoken to mankind, and continues with dignity which is not excelled in any part of the Bible. Its style and doctrine are exalted, ennobling, and purifying. It sets forth

the conclusion of Paul's arguments in favor of the Gospel in contradistinction from the Jewish law. In Romans and Galatians he reasoned in favor of the Gospel from the viewpoint of faith, but in his letter to the Hebrews he reasoned in favor of it from the viewpoint of the priesthood. Yet near the end of his argument he wrote an entire chapter concerning faith. Considered as a document, it is overwhelming in its array of evidence in favor of its conclusions, and will continue to be a delight to all who appreciate divine truth set forth in human language chosen with divine precision.

JAMES

CHAPTER I

What does the Apostle James set before us in his letter? The first chapter is chiefly devoted to patience, wisdom, faith, humility, temptation, sin, God's providence, and his work in redemption. The latter part of the chapter consists of an exhortation, followed by certain instructions. The 2nd chapter is chiefly devoted to faith and impartiality. The 3rd chapter is chiefly devoted to the tongue, and the importance of controlling it. The 4th chapter is largely devoted to the question of strife and its evil outworkings, to humility and God's providence. The first part of the 5th chapter is an arraignment of the rich who are unjust, followed by a series of exhortations for saints, with certain assurances of God's providence, and an encouragement to labor for the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways.

What is indicated in the 1st verse of the chapter now before us? It indicates that James did not believe that ten tribes of Israel were lost. On the contrary, he addressed "the twelve tribes" as if they were all in existence at the time he wrote. This is against all secular and religious historians who have written of "the lost ten tribes," as if only two or three of them were in existence. At first the tribes were thirteen in number—one from each of Jacob's twelve sons except Joseph, from whom sprang two tribes, namely, Ephraim and Manasseh. But only twelve of those tribes received a landed estate as tribes. The tribe of Levi, from which the priests were chosen, were scattered in Israel. When we come to Revelation 7th chapter we learn that the tribe of Dan is not named. In view of this, historians might write of one tribe that was lost, but not ten.

What may we say of the doctrine set forth in the first part of this chapter concerning temptations? It is in direct opposition to common conclusions. 'Mankind, generally, regard trials, of all kinds, as misfortunes, and even Christians are disposed to regard them thus. But James exhorts that we should "count it all joy" when we "fall into divers 674

temptations." Then he informs us of the reason, and that reason implies that patience cannot be cultivated, except under trying circumstances. This being true, all trials should be regarded as "blessings in disguise." They may be severe, and very irksome, yet if we meet them in the spirit of the Gospel they will certainly result in our good. We all need patience, and must have it if we would attain to the perfect development of character which the Gospel was intended to accomplish in us.

How should we regard the teaching that James offers in the 5th, 6th and 7th verses? At the time that James wrote his letter the Holy Spirit was yet bestowing special gifts, and among them was the gift of special wisdom. See I Corinthians 12:8. James declares that by praying the prayer of faith for the gift of wisdom it would be received. But as the bestowment of those special gifts was intended to cease (I Corinthians 13:8), Christians should not now expect wisdom, nor any other special gift, as a bestowment by the Spirit. The special gifts that were bestowed on different persons continued only till the perfect revelation had been made and committed to the Church. Each of those gifts made a partial revelation, and offered, in part, that which the completed revelation offers. But in I Corinthians 13:10 the indication is that when the perfect revelation—"perfect law of liberty"—would be made, then that which had offered the divine will "in part" would be "done away." And since the "perfect law of liberty" (see 25th verse of this chapter) has been offered to the Church we have all the truth that the special gifts offered, in all the primitive Christians combined. Therefore, we need to study the New Testament, as well as pray, in order to receive wisdom, and when we study and pray aright wisdom will be ours as a result of an education, but not as a special gift.

What is the condition of a man who is "double-minded"? He is without settled purpose, and is vacillating, changeable, unstable. As a result he cannot be depended on.

What may we learn by considering the 9th, 10th and 11th verses of this chapter? The 9th and 10th verses indicate that the Gospel has a leveling power. It brings the man "of low degree"—the "poor" man—up to a higher plane, and the man of high degree—the "rich" man—down to a lower plane. Besides, the rich man is encouraged to be willing to come down, "because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away." This reason is enlarged upon in the 11th verse, and does not encourage the rich man to trust in his riches. On the contrary, the description which is here

given of the passing of the "ways" of a rich man should certainly serve as a warning against trusting in riches. The "flower of the grass" is very delicate, and soon passes, and the same is true of the "ways" of a rich man.

What may we learn by examining the 12th verse, and on. ward to the end of the 14th? In the 12th verse strong consolation is offered to those who endure temptation, which should be strong encouragement to all Christians to endure even to the end. Then, in the 13th verse, James declares that God does not tempt man; that is, he does not tempt any one to do evil. Finally, in the 14th and 15th verses James makes mention of the relation between just and sin, and between sin and death. Is Genesis 22:1 op. posed to the statement that God does not tempt any man? No. The connection here shows that James meant' this: God does not tempt any man to do evil. He did put Abraham on trial to test his faith, in order to make him the father of "all them that believe." (Romans 4:11.) But he did not tempt him to do wrong, and the connection in which the Apostle James stated that God does not tempt any man, shows that he referred to temptation to do wrong. The 16th and 17th verses are a warning on this question, and should warn all who read them to avoid wrong conclusions concerning God. Every good and perfect gift comes from God, and we should not conclude that any evil comes from him, except as a judgment for wrong. This explains Isaiah 45:7 and Amos 3:6, with all other scriptures of the same class. The divine judgments which were inflicted upon those who rebelled against God were designated as "evil," and in that sense God has brought evil upon mankind. But those judgments have all been intended for correction. Even the worst of them were intended for the warning of those who were not overwhelmed by them.

What is revealed in the 18th verse? James was writing to his Jewish brethren, and the Jews were the first, with some Jewish proselytes, that were permitted to hear the Gospel. See Acts 3:26; 13:46. And James here declares that those Jews who were converted to Christ were, by the will of God, begotten by the word of truth. This reveals the process of conversion, by making a statement of it. The word of truth was the begetting power, or the power that produced conviction of sin, on the day of Pentecost, mentioned in the 2nd chapter of Acts, and the same has been true ever since, All those who declare that the Holy Spirit enters the hearts of sinners, separate from the word, and

convicts them of sin, show that they do not understand the Scriptures. In the Jewish Age God's Spirit testified against sinners through the prophets. See Nehemiah 9:30. In the Gospel Age that same Spirit testifies through the Apostles and inspired evangelists.

What may we say of the 19th, 20th and 21st verses? In the 19th verse an exhortation is set forth, which all should obey. The 20th verse should be considered in the light of Psalm 76:10, for God sometimes makes use of man's wrath in order to accomplish his ends. The hatred which Joseph's brethren showed toward him is an illustration. The "superfluity of naughtiness" is forbidden in the 21st verse. This implies that not all of it is forbidden. The Lord does not require impossibilities of us, and he knows that even when we do our best to discard "naughtiness" some of it will remain in us. But we should be careful to discard the "superfluity" of it, and not abuse our privilege to have some of it.

What of the 22nd verse, and onward to the end of the 24th? In those verses the Apostle James exhorts in regard to a fundamental question, namely, that of obeying the divine word, and studying it in order that it may be obeyed. A careless reading of the Bible, or glancing at its pages, will not suffice. Such use of the Bible James says is like a man looking at himself in a glass, and is not able to state a moment afterward what his appearance is—whether his face is clean or not, nor whether it is in its normal condition or not, in other respects.

What may we say of "the perfect law of liberty," as mentioned in the 25th verse? The connection indicates that the "law" here mentioned is the Gospel, or New Covenant teaching, in its fullness. In Galatians 5:1-4,13, that teaching is declared to be "liberty," and is so declared in contradistinction from the Jewish law, which is mentioned elsewhere as "the yoke of bondage." To this "perfect law of liberty" Paul must have had reference when he wrote of "that which is perfect," in 1 Corinthians 13:10, for he referred to something "perfect" in regard to revelation.

What of the 26th verse? It sets forth that which should keep all disciples from using their tongues too freely. What is here declared of a man is true of a woman also. The declarations, "He talks too much," and "She talks too much," are often heard, even concerning church members. One professed Christian, who talks too much, can greatly injure, and sometimes ruin, an entire church.

And what of the 27th verse? The Apostle James informs us in that verse that "pure religion and undefiled before God" consists of doing good to needy ones, and keeping one's self "unspotted from the world The fatherless and widows" are supposed to be the most needy ones, but in Galatians 6:10 we are informed that the Lord desires his people to "do good" to all others.

In view of this verse, what may we say of those who teach that religion is something to get and lose as often as religious impulse, on the one hand, may suggest, or evil impulse, on the other, may seem to make necessary? They "do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." The Sacred Scriptures do not make mention of religion, as something to "get and lose again," neither do they intimate in favor of such a doctrine. On the contrary, the teaching here is that "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is to do good to the most needy ones, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world." But in order to do this we must first cease to be of the world, by obeying the Gospel. This means that such religion as the Lord approves consists of benevolence and purity—benevolence in a specified direction, and purity of life in regard to the crimes, and vices, and follies, of the world. Thus it is written, in the 27th verse, and thus it remains, unchanged and unchangeable.

CHAPTER II

What may Bible readers learn by considering this chapter? We may learn in regard to the faith, or Gospel, and its relation to impartiality, and judging aright, so as not to be misled by appearances, so as to despise the poor. In connection with this we may learn of God's care for the poor, though the rich may oppress them. Next we are informed of the necessity of doing all, the divine commandments, and the danger of violating even one of them, also of the danger of exercising judgment without mercy. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of faith in its relation to works.

What may we say of the 1st verse of this chapter, and onward to the end of the 7th? In those verses James warns his readers against showing partiality by reason of appearances, and especially against being partial toward the rich, and against the poor. In the 6th verse he expresses his warning by reminding his readers of God's care for the poor, and specially of the fact that God has chosen those

of them that are "rich in faith" to be "heirs" of salvation. Then, in the 8th and 9th verses, James states that which implies that to *have respect for the rich, more than for the poor, is contrary to the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

What may we learn by considering the 10th and 11th verses? In them we are informed that in order for obedience to God to be acceptable it must be rendered by reason of respect for divine authority. We are also informed that whoever offends the authority by which one divine law is given thereby offends the authority by which all others are given, and is, therefore, held guilty of offending in regard to all of them. He that gave one divine command gave all the others also, and, therefore, his authority is the authority of them all. For instance, if a father gives his son a dozen commands to obey, and the son obeys in eleven of them, but fails in the twelfth, because, perhaps, he cannot see any use in it, then that father might refuse to accept the son's obedience in all the other commands. Why? Because if the son could not have seen any use in his father's other commands, he would not have obeyed him in any of them. But if the son would obey all of his father's command.,; simply because his father had given them, then he would show respect for his father's authority. Thus it is with us in relation to God's commands. If we have reverence for his authority we will obey them all to the utmost, even if we cannot see any use in any of them.

What of the 12th and 13th verses? In the 12th verse James commands his readers to speak and judge as those that shall be judged by the Gospel. And, as the Gospel is a doctrine of mercy, those, in the Gospel Age, who refuse to show mercy, shall be judged without mercy. This is illustrated in Matthew 18:23-35.

What may we learn by considering the 24th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? We may learn that all who profess to have faith in God and Christ, but will not obey the requirements of the Gospel, certainly make a vain profession. Their faith is declared to be "dead," and a dead faith certainly cannot save.

Why does the scripture declare that Abraham "offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar," when, according to Genesis, 22nd chapter, he did not slay Isaac? The answer is this: The record informs that Abraham actually bound Isaac and placed him on the altar, for the purpose of slaying him, before God stopped him from completing that purpose.

In view of this Abraham did offer Isaac on that altar though he did not slay him. Besides, in thought and feeling, Abraham did all that God commanded with reference to offering Isaac, and only failed to slay him and burn his body, because God prevented him from so doing.

Why was Rahab, the harlot, justified by works, though the works that she did were for the purpose of deception? See Joshua 2nd chapter. The answer is, that the law against falsehood had not been given to Rahab, and "where no law is there is no transgression." (Romans 4:15.) Besides, her deception was for the purpose of saving life, and in time of war life may be saved by deception. Finally the deception she practiced was in favor of two of God's people, and God has never forgotten Genesis 12:3. Therefore, he has ever been disposed to remember with kindness those who will favor his people.

In view of all that is set forth in this chapter in regard to the relation between faith and works, what may we say of those who teach that sinners "axe justified by faith only"? We may say that they "do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." But what should we say if they refer to Romans 4:1-5, as evidence in favor of their teaching on this subject? We should remind them that, in Romans 4:3, we learn that Paul was writing about works of merit which would bring God in "debt" to the worker. Man can never do such works. But James wrote of works of obedience, and declared that Abraham and others were justified by such works. In view of this we find that Paul and James wrote in harmony with each other, and the doctrine is true that works of obedience are necessary to a living faith. Besides, they are the result of a living faith, and, "as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Woe, then, to all those who teach that sinners are justified by "faith only," or by "faith alone ,

But what should be our answer to those who teach the doctrine that Abraham was justified by faith alone, before he became a child of God, and quote Romans 4:1-5 to prove it, but teach that, after he became a child of God, he had to work as well as have faith, and quote James 2:21-23 to prove it? We should inform them that the record of Abraham's life shows that he always did all that the Lord commanded him, from the time that he commanded him to leave Ur of the Chaldees onward. Therefore, we should pronounce the doctrine now under consideration as without

foundation in the Sacred Text. Besides, it is contrary to that which the Sacred Text declares. Finally, it is an absurdity on its face. The idea that God would justify a sinner by faith without requiring him to do anything to show his faith, but would require his children to do works of faith, is absurd as well as unscriptural.

CHAPTER III

Of what are Bible readers here informed? Information is here given concerning the danger of being masters, or teachers, and then in regard to the tongue as a dangerous member of the body if not controlled. In the latter part of the chapter certain remarks are offered concerning two kinds of wisdom.

What is the bearing of the 1st verse of this chapter? The first shade of meaning of the Greek word here translated "masters" is "teachers," and this is the shade of meaning which should have been adopted by the translators. Then the Greek word here translated "be" really means in this connection "to become; assume the character or position of." Now we have the idea clearly. James commanded thus: "My brethren, let not many assume the position of teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment. , The first meaning of the word here translated "condemnation" is "judgment," and the idea here is that the responsibility of a teacher is such that not many should assume that position, because both before men and in the sight of God they will receive the greater, or severer, judgment. The 2nd verse seems to bear in this direction. A teacher needs to know his business so as to avoid giving offense to the utmost that may be possible. Yet the apostle intimates that even when the best care is exercised some offense will be committed. He intimates also that one reason that teachers offend is that they do not control their tongues in a perfect manner. This is certainly true when teachers lose control of their tempers.

What may we say of the 3rd and 4th verses? In them the apostle sets forth illustrations of small forces accomplishing great results, and, then, in the 5th verse, he mentions the tongue as that which he intended to illustrate.

What may we say of the 6th verse? It is an inspired description of the mischief which the tongue can do if not controlled, and of the origin of the fire which it kindles. This description is so intense, and terrible, that all who read it should be alarmed at the thought of the damage

which the tongue may do if suffered to be uncontrolled. The declaration that it "is set on fire of hell" suggest, that the Greek word translated "slanderer," in the New Testament, means devil, and from that word we have the word "diabolical," which means devilish. This being true, A slanderer is a devilish character. This should be considered in this connection.

What of the 7th and 8th verses? The 7th verse sets forth another illustration of the tongue, and in the 8th verse is the application made. This is followed by statements, in the 9th and 10th verses, of the contrary speeches which come from the tongue. In the 11th and 12th verses more illustrations of this question are offered by the apostle. Then in the 13th verse James implies that to control the tongue is a mark of wisdom. In Job 28:28, also in Psalm 111:10, we learn that the fear of the Lord is "wisdom," even "the beginning of wisdom," and James here informs us that wisdom will enable a man to control his tongue. In harmony with this we find the teaching of Ecclesiastes 5:2, also Proverbs 18:2. Though silence is not always a mark of wisdom, yet the rule is, the less wisdom a man has the more he is disposed to talk. The same is true of a woman. James wrote of "meekness of wisdom," and this expression deserves to be written in large letters, and framed as a motto in every home. Some are by nature endowed with so much common sense that they can easily show "meekness of wisdom," while others will find such meekness very difficult to manifest. Yet Proverbs 18:7 is always true, and all who will study the Bible as they should will feel the importance of measuring their words so as not to be numbered with fools.

What do we find in the remainder of this chapter? We find two kinds of wisdom mentioned and defined, both in regard to origin and outworkings. The one kind "descendeth not from above," but is earthly, sensual, devilish; the other kind "is from above," and "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." In connection with the wisdom that is not from above, James mentions "bitter envyings and strife," also "confusion and every evil work." Then in connection with "the wisdom that is from above" he mentions that "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. , In view of all this Bible readers are certainly responsible for the kind of wisdom they endeavor to have and show. Nor should they hesitate which kind to desire.

CHAPTER IV

What may we learn in this chapter? We may learn of the outworkings of human passion, pride and presumption, also of the divine law in regard to them.

Was it necessary for the Apostle James to write as severely as he here did in order to warn Christians against the evils that he here mentions? Yes. In 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 we learn that certain members of the church in Corinth had been going to law with each other, and such misconduct was certainly in the direction of all that James here mentions. Besides the Holy Spirit had in view all that professed Christians would, in course of time, be disposed to do in gratifying their lusts and passions and presumption. He knew what human nature would do if not controlled by the Gospel, and he caused James to write in view of it all as it might manifest itself in all time.

What may we say of the 4th verse? It should be read in the light of Luke 16:15. This touches the question of popularity. In view of the beatitudes, as recorded in Matthew 5:3-12, all efforts on the part of Christianity to become popular with the world are in opposition to the Savior's teaching. The business of the Church with the world is to convert it, but not to become popular with it by imitating its ways.

What of the 6th verse? The secret of, all desire for popularity with the world is pride, and God resists those that are proud. In Proverbs 6:16-19 we learn that there are seven things that are "an abomination" to God, and the first that is mentioned in that scripture is "a proud look."

What may we say of the declaration, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you"? It is true of the devil, for he knows when he is defeated. But it is not true of some men and women. They seem to be worse than the devil, for if you resist them they will spring at you and attack you. Some who profess to be Christians show this disposition. They make a pretension of religious devotion which causes them to appear sanctimonious. And if you cross their path, or resist any of their schemes, they will assail you with a venom which will astonish you. They show utter disregard for the Lord's cause and make an exhibition of temper which would disgrace the devil's cause if they would profess to be on his side.

What of the 8th, 9th and 10th verses? In them James sets forth several plain, pointed commands, with two promises.

The promises are that God will draw nigh to those who draw nigh unto him, and that he will lift those up who humble themselves in his sight. These promises, as well as the commands connected with them, should cause all mankind who love the Bible, especially all who profess to be Christians, to banish all pride and humble themselves before God at all times.

Of what are we informed in the 11th verse? A command is here given against evil speaking, and then a statement of that which an evil speaker is guilty of. But how is it that he that "judgeth his brother speaketh evil of the law ... , He does this by ignoring the law and assuming the place of the law in acting the part of a judge. The Greek word here translated. "judgeth" means also to condemn, and such is the meaning in this connection. In John 7:24 we learn that "righteous judgment" is not only lawful, but is commanded. The man who assumes the place of the law ignores it, and implies that it is not sufficient to measure people by. In that sense he condemns the law.

What of the 13th verse and onward to the end of the chapter? In the 13th verse we find a rebuke of presumption and in the 14th a warning in regard to the shortness and uncertainties of life, while in the 15th we find an indication of the feeling that we should have in regard to the Lord's will. This is followed by statements in the 16th verse of the evil of such "rejoicing" and "boasting" as those were guilty of whom James addressed. All boasting of human power and success is in God's sight abominable. It is an outworking of pride and is condemnable.

What is set forth in the last verse of this chapter? In this verse is set forth the sin of omission—a sin by reason of which millions of good persons will be condemned in the last day. All who will in the last day be found to have neglected the light which God gave to them or placed within their reach, will be condemned, even if they will never have committed any other sin. Mankind do not need to be vile sinners, nor out-breaking sinners of any kind, in order to be lost. All they need to do is to neglect the: Gospel or neglect to read the Bible, so as to learn what the Gospel is. Then their condemnation will be assured. The moral character may be very good, and the conversation may be always chaste, but if the mind and heart and life will not have been brought into subjection to the divine will then final condemnation will be assured, for, "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

CHAPTER V

What is recorded in this chapter, the last of the letter now before us? An arraignment of the rich, who were unjust, is first recorded, then an exhortation to patience on the part of the brethren whom James addressed, followed by a reference to the prophets as examples of patience. Then we find a record of an exhortation against swearing, and instructions with reference to the afflicted," the "merry" and "the sick." This is followed by an exhortation in regard to confession of faults, mention of the value of fervent prayer, enforced by a reference to a certain prophet who prayed to God. The chapter is ended with certain instructions concerning the Christian who errs from the truth, and the importance of converting him from the error of his ways.

What may we say of the arraignment of the unjust rich, as recorded in the first of this chapter? It is very severe, and should be a sufficient warning to all others who have secured riches in an unjust manner. The Lord will not forget their unjust conduct.

What of the exhortation to patience recorded in the 7th and 8th verses? James follows his exhortation in the 7th verse by a reference to the coming of the Lord, and to the patience of the farmer who waits for rain to cause the earth to produce its "precious fruits." Then he follows his exhortation to patience by a reference to the Savior's second coming, and the declaration that it "draweth nigh." This is followed by an exhortation against Christians grudging each other, and a warning against those who engage in grudging.

What may we learn by considering the 10th and 11th verses? We may learn that James indicates in these verses the value of the Old Testament as a record, even as Paul did in Romans 15:4 and in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, likewise in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. In view of the reference which James here makes to the patience of Job, what may we say of those who declare that Job was a fabulous character? We may say that they might as well say that James was not inspired, and cast aside all that he wrote. But this is not all. They should impeach Ezekiel, for he endorsed Job several times, classed him with Noah and Daniel, and wrote of him as a man, as having a soul, as having righteousness and influence with God. See Ezekiel 14:14,16,18,20. Those who regard Job as a fabulous character, but profess to believe the Now Testament, show that they do not reason correct-

ly. Yet to pronounce them infidels would be an unmerited compliment on their logic and an unjust reproach on their faith.

What of the 12th verse? It is certainly against profane swearing, and seems to be against swearing of all other kinds. In view of this we should not take even a legal or judicial oath, but should affirm "under the pains and penalties of perjury." The difference between an oath and an affirmation is that the former begins with the word "swear" and ends with the words "so help me God," while the latter does not make use of the word "swear," nor of the name of God. What may we say of those religious creeds and confessions of faith in which preachers when questioned for ordination are required to conclude their answers with the words "the Lord being my helper," or some other words in which the name of the Lord is used? They, do err." Such a form of expression seems to partake of the nature of an oath, and cannot be justified even by Galatians 1:20. Paul could call God to witness that which he said with more confidence than we can.

What may we say of the 14th verse? By reading Mark 6:13 we may learn to what order of things the laying on of hands here mentioned refers. Then in Acts 14:23 we learn that the Apostles ordained elders by laying on of hands, and in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 we may learn that near or about all members of the church at Corinth were more or less specially gifted. In view of this we may safely conclude that the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, as' here mentioned, pertained strictly to the period of special gifts. Moreover, James wrote to his Jewish brethren, who were the "first fruits" of the Gospel, and to them the Lord granted some special favors. Finally, if the 12th verse of this chapter had been intended for Gentile Christians, as well as for Jewish Christians, why did not Paul inform Timothy to pray, or call for the elders of the church to pray, and anoint him with oil? Timothy was at least a half-Jew, yet Paul told him to "take a little wine." Nor is this all.

Why did Paul leave Trophimus "at Miletum sick" if the faith-cure doctrine was intended to prevail? Finally, if this doctrine of healing the sick by prayer and laying on of hands had continued then Christians would not need to die.

What should we say to those who declare that Christians could now work miracles if they could only exercise sufficient faith? We should refer them to I Corinthians 12:

9, and inform them that there was a "faith" which was bestowed as a special gift on some of the primitive church even as was the power to work miracles bestowed in the days of the personal ministry of the Apostles. But as those gifts have ceased, with all others, how is any one going to obtain the miracle-working faith?

What is set forth for our learning in the 16th, 17th and 18th verses? In them we find the command for Christians to confess faults one to another, and to pray for one another, and these commands are followed by an encouragement to pray which is applicable to all Christians. But should Christians now expect that the Lord is going to work a miracle in giving them rain in answer to their prayers? In response we may say that the Lord does not need to work a miracle in order to cause rain to fall on the earth. His arrangement for rain is already made, and, as a rule, a change of wind is all that is needed. A south wind, or an east wind in many places, to continue for two or three days, is all that is needed to bring rain. But some one may ask if the Lord cannot heal sickness in the same way by his providence? Certainly. By his providence he can lead a sick person to find the right doctor, or the right remedy, to effect a cure. If we know the right physician, or the right remedy, we should make use thereof; if not, we may find what we need in answer to prayer by being led in the right way or to the right place to learn of that which we need.

What may we say of the last of this chapter? In the last two verses of this chapter we find the doctrine of falling from grace, also the value of a soul set forth. If the doctrine of "once in grace always in grace" had been true the Apostle James could not have declared all that is here set forth.

What is meant by the expression, "hide a multitude of sins"? First of all, to convert a person from a sinful life is to prevent that one from committing many sins that would be committed if, the sinful life would be continued. Then as the Lord will forgive the erring one when that one's repentance is sincere and full, all the sins that are forgiven in such an instance will not appear in the judgment. Thus it is that he that "converteth the sinner from the error of his ways shall . . . hide a multitude of sins." Besides, he shall thereby "save a soul from death," which means that a spirit shall be kept from "the second death." (Revelation 20:6, 14.)

What may we say of the letter of James as a document? It is more practical than doctrinal, and its chief doctrinal teachings are brought to a practical bearing. This is indicated in the 2nd chapter, in which faith is set forth in its relation to works, and thus in its practical bearings. The severity of expression set forth in the 3rd and 4th chapters, also in the first part of the 5th, is an evidence of the divine earnestness which filled the Apostle James in behalf of all mankind, and especially in behalf of the Church.

1st PETER

CHAPTER I

What may Bible readers learn by considering this letter? In John 21:15-17 we learn that Christ commanded Peter to feed his lambs, and, then, twice commanded him to feed his sheep. In this letter we may learn of the kind of spiritual food which Peter offered to the Lord's lambs and sheep.

What is offered in the chapter now before us? After stating that he addressed those who were "scattered throughout" certain countries, and declaring that they were of God's "elect," he wrote of their "hope" which had been begotten "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," also that their hope was to "an inheritance incorruptible." Then he wrote of the "manifold temptations" through which those whom he addressed were then passing, also of their "joy unspeakable," and of the "salvation" which they should finally receive. Next he made mention of the prophets who wrote concerning that salvation, and what they endeavored to learn, and did learn, in regard to it. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to an exhortation to holiness, and the reasons on which his exhortation was founded.

In what sense are Christians the "elect"? In chapter 2:6 we are informed that Christ is God's "elect." This enables us to understand how all Christians are God's "elect." For in becoming Christians we obey Christ, put him on as the hope of glory, and become members of his body. In so doing we become the elect. Our election is in Christ, and by reason of our obedience to him, and, then, by continuing faithful, we make our "election sure." See 2 Peter 1:10.

What is the bearing of the expression "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," as recorded in the 2nd verse? Reference is here made to that which Christ did for us when he ascended to heaven, as indicated in Hebrews 12:24. In fulfilling that which was foreshadowed by the high priest each year when he went into the most holy place of the

tabernacle, and temple, with the blood of atonement, Jesus ascended to heaven and did that for us which is here designated “the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”

What may we say of the 3rd and 4th verses of this chapter? In them Peter blessed the divine Father for the living hope to which he had been begotten by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. In course of Christ's personal ministry Peter cherished the hope that was common among the Jews, namely, that the Messiah would be an earthly ruler of great power. But when Christ was put to death in the flesh that hope died. Nor did it revive till he was enabled by the Holy Spirit to understand the spiritual character of Christ's kingdom. Then he understood the meaning of Christ's resurrection, and in view of its meaning he wrote the verses now under consideration. They are very appropriately followed by mention of the final salvation which is yet to be revealed.

What of the 6th verse and onward to the end of the 12th? In these verses the “salvation” mentioned in the 5th is set forth as that in which those who are Christians may “greatly rejoice,” even in the midst of “manifold temptations.” He next mentioned the end which will be accomplished by the trials which God suffers Christians to endure, and then declared that “the prophets” who wrote of that end “inquired and searched diligently” concerning its meaning. Finally, he declared that they were not informed fully of its meaning, but learned that they were foretelling of certain glories which should be afterwards revealed.

What may we say of the 13th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? In those verses we find a series of exhortations accompanied by much instruction. Is it possible for Christians to be as holy as God is? No, nor is that the idea set forth in the 15th and 16th verses. But the holiness of God is mentioned as a reason why Christians should be “holy in all manner of conversation.” What does such holiness require of us? It certainly requires that we should keep our conversation clear of falsehood, profanity, vulgarity and nonsense. We should not use profane nor vulgar speech, even in repeating that which another has said.

What of the 20th verse? It indicates that God began to prepare for the redemption of man before he had sinned, and even before he was created, just as a wise man sometimes makes provision for the sickness of his children by

inquiring concerning the best physician, even before his children are born. In answer to those who inquire why God created man if he knew that he would sin, we may ask why a wise man enters into the marriage relation when he has the best reason to suppose that such relation will result in much suffering, and, finally, in the death of all who may be brought into existence by reason of such relation. The wisest and best of men have entered into the marriage relation for companionship, but especially that they might bring into existence beings in their own image, who would love them because they first loved those beings. This was one end which God had in view when he created man. See 1 John 4:19. Besides, the wisest and best of men will subject their children to trial in order to test them, and if they go wrong they will lend to them a helping hand to bring them back to the right way in order to convince them of their love for them. On this principle, or plan, God has dealt with man from the beginning, and will continue to deal with him till the end.

Why should Christians pass their life in “fear” as commanded in the 17th verse? They should “fear” because of the great price that was paid for their redemption. They should fear to sin when they consider the cost of sin. It cost the life's blood of Christ. This fact should be sufficient to prevent mankind from all wilful sin, and should cause them to be very careful to avoid all other kinds of sin.

What may we specially say of the 22nd verse? In this verse a doctrine is revealed which should banish from the minds of mankind the idea that God needs to send of his Holy Spirit, in a direct manner, into the hearts of sinners to purify them. The declaration here is that those whom the Apostle Peter addressed had “purified” their “souls in obeying the truth.” The Spirit of God has revealed the truth to be obeyed, and it is recorded for us in the writings of certain apostles and inspired evangelists. When obedience to that truth is rendered, then the souls of those rendering it are “purified” in obeying the truth.

What of the 23rd verse? In this also a doctrine is revealed which should banish another error from the minds of those possessed of it. The Apostle Peter here declares that those who become Christians are born of seed that is “incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” In Mark 4:14 we read, “The sower soweth the word.” This declaration in the Savior's explanation of the parable of the sower is in harmony with the scripture before us in Peter's first letter. The word of God is “incorruptible” seed

and when sown into honest hearts it will bring forth the fruit of obedience, which, when fully accomplished, is declared to be a new birth. In John 3:5 we find the Savior's declaration, in the hearing of Nicodemus, on this subject. Taking the 22nd and 23rd verses together, we may safely say that they teach the purification of the soul, and the new birth by obeying the truth as set forth in the word of God.

What is revealed for our learning in 24th and 25th verses? First of all we find here recorded certain declarations, which are repeated from the Old Testament, concerning the shortness of life and frailty of the flesh, and man's earthward glory, also concerning the constancy of "the word of the Lord." This is followed by the assurance that "this is the word" which is set forth "by the gospel," or is set forth "as gospel," as we find in certain translations of this passage. In view of the instruction offered in these last two verses, what is wisdom on the part of all mankind? Wisdom requires that we shall fear God and keep his commandments. See Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10. We are so frail, and so transient, while God's word is so strong and so constant, that wisdom requires us to distrust ourselves and rely on the divine word. God is so great and good, this world is so great and grand, the Bible is so great and constant, while we are so small and weak, that we ought to feel humbled, and, even, humiliated, at the thought of ourselves, but ever filled with adoration and confidence when we think of God, and of all that we have learned of him, and of his glory.

CHAPTER II

What is here revealed for Bible readers? An exhortation to Christians who have not made much growth in their spiritual life is here revealed, followed by certain statements concerning God and Christ, also statements in regard to their relationship to Christ, and his relationship to the disobedient. This is followed by a statement of the high and holy character and office of the Christians whom Peter addressed, and, thus, of all Christians. The remainder of the chapter is made up of a series of exhortations with certain other instructions.

What would be the result if young Christians, and all others who have not made much advancement in the truth, would conform to the exhortation found in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? They would grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, and, thus, would become strong

in the Lord and in the power of his might. As a result they would not be disposed to go back to the world, nor to become reprobates concerning the faith, but would know what to lay aside, and what to desire, what to avoid, and what to practice.

What of the 3rd verse, and onward to the end of the 8th? In the 3rd verse Peter intimates that those whom he addressed might have obeyed the Gospel in a formal manner, only, and, as a result, might not have come into real spiritual communication with Christ. Some of that class were connected with the Church while Peter was personally present on earth as an apostle, and some of that class are now connected with the Church. But those who have become Christians in reality, and not in form only, have come to Christ “as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious.” That is to say, they have come to Christ as the one who was rejected of the chief Jews, who demanded that he should be put to death. Yet he was “chosen of God,” and was “precious” in the divine sight. Having set forth all this the apostle declared that those whom he addressed were “living stones,” and were “built up a spiritual house,” which is the Church. To this he added that they had become a “holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” May the Lord's day contributions be numbered with such spiritual sacrifices? In Philippians 4:18 Paul indicates that they may be thus numbered, if offered with the right disposition.

What may we say of the 6th, 7th and 8th verses? In them Peter sets forth a conclusion from statements made in the 4th and 5th verses, and adds to them. Were the disobedient Jews, referred to in the 7th and 8th verses, really “appointed” unto disobedience or appointed unto stumbling because of their disobedience? The answer is found in Matthew 13:15. Those Jews closed their eyes to the truth, and they were appointed unto stumbling “at the word” as a judgment for closing their eyes.

What is indicated in the 9th verse? The indication here is, that Christians are the highest, and most highly favored, characters on earth. They may, in earthly affairs, be poor and obscure among mankind, but, in God's estimation, they are the most exalted characters. Dignified expressions seem to be exhausted in this verse in the effort here made to describe the excellency, dignity, and grandeur of the spiritual position and relationship of Christians. The 10th verse adds to the description here given, and indicates that the “strang-

ers,” to whom Peter here referred, were Gentiles who had been converted to Christ. See Romans 10:19-21. In the 19th verse just referred to the expression “no people” meant Gentiles in contrast with the Jews, which expression is equal to “not a people” in the 10th verse of the chapter now before us.

What of the 11th and 12th verses? In them we find an exhortation which indicates what those whom Peter addressed should abstain from, and why, and in the 12th verse we learn what they were required to do, and why. In other words, they were to “abstain from fleshly lusts” because they “war against the soul,” and they were required to have their “conversation honest among the Gentiles,” in order that they might be led to “glorify God in the day of visitation, “ or in the day in which Christ will come to gather His faithful ones to himself. In Luke 19:44 the word “visitation” is used with reference to Christ's presence and miracles among the Jews. The first meaning of the Greek word thus translated is “inspection,” and this is the idea which should be here adopted, for when Christ will come again mankind will be inspected, even as they were inspected while he was engaged in his personal ministry.

What is the bearing of the 13th verse, and on to the end of the 17th? The bearing is that Christians should be good citizens in the earthly government in which they live, as well as in the kingdom of Christ. But if rulers in earthly governments should command Christians to do something contrary to the will of Christ—then what should we do? In Acts 5:29 we find the answer. Civil rulers have not a right to command Christians contrary to the teachings of Christ, nor to interfere with their obedience to Christ. But if they do, then we are required to disobey them and accept the consequences.

In the last of the 17th verse Christians are commanded to “honor the king.” But suppose they live in a republic—then what? They should honor their chief magistrate, and thereby obey the command under consideration in principle, and in spirit.

What do we find in the 18th, 19th and 20th verses? We find direction given to servants in relation to their masters, whether they be “good and gentle” or “froward” masters. The reason for these directions is set forth in the reference made to Christ in the 21st verse, and onward to the end of the 24th. Christ's example of patience when suffering unjustly should cause all Christians to be patient when

required thus to suffer. In the last verse of this chapter mention is made of all Christians as “sheep” while Christ is mentioned as “the Shepherd and Bishop” of our souls. “

CHAPTER III

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed of Peter's instructions to wives in relation to their husbands, and husbands in relation to their wives. This is followed by instructions to all Christians in regard to certain excellencies which all should practice. Reference is then made to the Lord's care for his people as a reason for them all to do right, and the intimation is given that they will not be harmed if they do that which is right. This is followed by mention that those are happy who “suffer for righteousness sake” and encouragement “to be not afraid” of the “terror” of those who would inflict suffering upon the righteous. Next we are further informed of that which Christians should do with reference to the Lord, and be ready to do toward certain others, and of the probable result of so doing upon false accusers. To this Peter adds a strong argument in favor of suffering wrongfully, by referring to Christ's sufferings. The apostle then passed to the resurrection of Christ which was accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, and then to the preaching that he did by the same Spirit to the people who lived before the flood, and referred to the saving of Noah by water, and to our salvation by baptism through the resurrection of Christ.

What is set forth in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? The possibility of men being converted to Christ by the conversion of their wives, even “without the word,” is here set forth. In 2 Corinthians 3:2 we are informed how this can be accomplished. Persons in the world who know us, and have opportunity to inspect our lives, can read the Word in us as we manifest it in our daily walk and conversation.

What may we learn by considering Peter's instructions, as here given, about women “adorning” themselves? His instructions, on this subject, are, first, negative, and, then, affirmative. As Peter sums up his negative instruction with the expression “putting on of apparel” we are enabled to understand the meaning of all else that he set forth on the negative side of this subject. He certainly did not intend to forbid women to put on clothing, and this implies that he did not intend to forbid them to plait their hair, or

wear gold. All of these negative instructions belong to the same class of things, and if Peter intended to forbid women using one of them, then he must have intended to forbid the use of all of them. But this would require women to keep themselves in a nude state. Therefore, all that Peter here meant was that though women plat, or braid the hair, put on gold, and put on apparel, yet their “adorning” should not consist of this. That is to say, they should not make these their beauty and attractions. But they should adorn themselves with “a meek and quiet spirit.” Paul in 1 Timothy 2:9 is more positive than Peter here is, for he mentions “modest apparel,” and “not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.” But all that both of these apostles say on this subject needs to be considered. Then the conclusion must be that women should put on modest apparel, and be modest in manner, having a meek and quiet spirit, and if they plat their hair or have a watch for convenience, their adornment should not consist of such things. All ultraism, or extreme notions, on this subject, as on all others, should be avoided.

What is the bearing of the word “amazement” in the last of the 6th verse? The Greek word thus translated in that verse means “terror, consternation, fear.” The idea is that wives who are Christians should obey their husbands, and should do so because God requires it, but not because they are filled with terror, consternation, nor even fear for their husbands. The honor of their obedience should be given to God and not to man: Besides, they should not be afraid to offend popular opinions, nor the fashionable notions of the age in which they may live. Peter says, “not afraid with any amazement.” In other words they should fear God, and obey their husbands in all that their husbands have a right to command them, because God requires it, and not because they are filled with terror for their husbands, nor for anybody else, nor for anything else. That kind of obedience to husbands would not be acceptable to God. In what estimate do wives, generally, hold the teachings that we are now considering? With few exceptions they disregard them utterly, and act according to impulse and passion, whim and fancy. This is, perhaps, more generally true in the United States of America than in any other country. Why? The flattery which women have received from certain classes of preachers and lecturers, together with the errors set forth in the fiction they read, explains much, and native pride, perhaps, explains the remainder.

What of the instructions given to husbands in the 7th verse? Many husbands reverse it, and seem to regard their wives as the stronger vessels, and instead of helping them to the utmost they selfishly take their ease, and allow their wives to wear their lives out, and die before the time when their strength would naturally fail. To this rule there are a few, even many, noble exceptions, yet the exceptions are not sufficient to make the rule. In a few instances husbands are so considerate toward their wives that they become enslaved to them, and wives are so considerate toward their husbands that they are enslaved to them. Both extremes should be avoided. Manly men, and womanly women, will always scorn to be made babies of.

What of the 8th and 9th verses? In them the Apostle Peter offers instructions for all Christians in their relations to each other, even telling them to be “courteous,” and to return good for evil. If such instructions would be generally received and adopted by all Christians, what would be the result? The churches of Christ would soon be increased manifold in their influence and members, and God's name would be glorified. Psalm 81:13-16 are the scriptures here suggested. Thus it would have been with God's ancient people, and thus it will be with us by doing the divine will.

What of the 10th verse, and onward to the end of the 17th? In those verses Christians are instructed with reference to discarding of evil speech, and seeking peace, remembering that the Lord sees and hears with reference to “the righteous,” but that his face is “against them that do evil.” Then Peter reasoned with reference to the advantage of doing “that which is good,” and endeavored to encourage Christians to do good, and, if necessary, suffer for it rather than to suffer for doing evil.

What is the bearing of the 15th verse? To “sanctify the Lord God” in our hearts is to hold him separated and sacred above all earthly beings and considerations. The command found in the latter part of that verse require that Christians shall be able to state why they are Christians, and not worldlings nor sectarians. This requires much studying of the Bible.

What may we learn by considering the last four verses of this chapter? We may learn that, by the same Spirit that Christ was raised from the dead he preached through Noah to the people before the flood, while the ark was being prepared by Noah. In Nehemiah 9:30 we learn that God

testified to the Jews by his Spirit in the prophets whom he sent to them. This indicates how the preaching was done to those who lived before the flood. It was done by the Spirit through Noah who was “a preacher of righteousness.” (2 Peter 2:5.)

What may we say of those who teach that Christ did the preaching here referred to while his body was in the tomb, and his spirit was in paradise? We may say that they “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” Besides, they overlook the following considerations:

1. Christ's body was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit. This is evident from the last of the 18th verse, also from Romans 8:11, which informs us that our bodies will be raised by that Spirit.

2. The preaching that Peter mentioned in the 19th verse of this chapter was done by the “Spirit,” and not by Christ himself.

3. Christ and the Holy Spirit are two distinct and separate persons.

4. If Christ had done the mentioned preaching while in that part of “hades” called “paradise,” why did he not preach to all the spirits that were in “hades,” and not only to those who were disobedient while the ark was in process of preparation?

5. The fact that those only are here mentioned who were disobedient in the days of Noah, and that only such disobedience is mentioned as those persons were guilty of while Noah was preparing the ark, should settle every Bible reader in the conclusion that the preaching here mentioned was done by Noah while he was building the ark.

6. In John 1:1, 14 we learn that Christ existed as “the Word” “in the beginning,” and this implies that all the preaching of the Word of God that has ever been done may be scripturally attributed to him.

7. The preaching that he did here on earth was not done till after the Holy Spirit came upon him. (Matthew 3:13-17.)

8. All the preaching that the Apostles did, by divine authority, was done by the same Spirit.

9. In Nehemiah 9:30 we learn that the preaching that the Jewish prophets did was done by the same Spirit.

10. All this implies that the preaching that was done while the ark was in process of preparation was done by Noah as a preacher of righteousness while he was building the ark.

Finally, in the latter part of Luke 16th chapter we learn of some preaching that was done to one of the spirits in

prison, and it was not consoling to that spirit. See the record of the rich man and Abraham in hades.

What may we say of the 21st verse? The Apostle Peter, having declared in the last of the preceding verse, that “eight souls were saved by water,” then declared the value of water baptism. As the waters of the flood separated Noah and his family from the sinfulness of the world of mankind before the flood, so the waters of baptism were intended to separate those who are immersed from the sinfulness of their life in this world. While Noah and his family were in the ark, the waters of the flood were between them and the old world, so while those who are baptized are under the surface of the waters of their baptism the water that is over them is between them and their old life of sin in the world.

What is the force of the expression, “not the putting away of the filth of the flesh”? Baptism is not like a bath, to cleanse the body, but is strictly religious, and has a Godward bearing.

How is baptism “the answer of a good conscience toward God”? Baptism in water is a command that must be obeyed by pure faith. Neither sense nor reason requires that it shall be done. That is to say, we cannot see any use in it either from the viewpoint of sense or reason, therefore it must be attended to by pure faith, or faith only. This being true it is evident that all those who obey Christ in baptism are assured within themselves that they have sufficient faith to obey Christ regardless of reason, or sense. This is “the answer of a good conscience toward God.”

Are not all those scripturally baptized who have been baptized for the purpose of having “the answer of a good conscience toward God”? Yes, even as those who are baptized for the purpose of having “remission of sins,” or for the purpose of being “born of water,” or being “buried with Christ,” or to “fulfill all righteousness.”

What of the last verse of this chapter? In Ephesians 1:22 we are informed that Christ has been placed over all the kingdoms of this world. Then in 1 Corinthians 15:25 we learn that “he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” All this is in harmony with the declaration that he is “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” (1 Timothy 6:15.) Though now he suffers the nations of the earth to manage their own affairs, yet the time will come (Revelation 11:15-18) when “the kingdoms of this world” will, by the exercise of God's “great power,” “become the king

doing of our Lord and of his Christ.” When that time will come “the nations” will be “angry.” This indicates that those kingdoms will not be subjugated by the proclamation of the Gospel, for then the nations would rejoice and not become “angry” at God's exercise of his “great Power.” In view of this, what may we say of missionary society enthusiasts who talk of taking the world for Christ? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.”

CHAPTER IV

What is here set forth for us to consider? Reference is first made to Christ's suffering for us in the flesh as a basis for an exhortation to Christians in regard to the endurance of suffering, and information in regard to the results of such endurance. Next we are informed in regard to “the time past” of our lives, and what worldlings think of us when we do not go with them into excess. After this we read of the preaching of the Gospel to those who are now dead, and the purpose of it. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a series of exhortations, or hortatory commands, accompanied by much information as foundations for those commands.

What may we say of the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? In the 1st verse is a reference to the sufferings of Christ in the flesh, and then an exhortation for Christians to prepare themselves in mind to suffer in the flesh. In this reference and exhortation the idea is implied that as Christ suffered in the flesh Christians will not be permitted to escape such suffering. Then in the last part of this verse followed by the next verse we find that which suggests Psalm 119:67, 71. This suggests also the fact that a certain young man lost his eyesight, and then he gave such attention to religion that he finally obeyed the Gospel. A certain prize-fighter suffered an injury to one of his hands, and, as a result, ceased his evil business as a prize-fighter. The same has been true with multitudes of others. In proportion as they have “suffered in the flesh” they have “ceased from sin.” This being true, all misfortunes that tend to make us sober-minded, and that lead us to consider our spiritual welfare, are “blessings in disguise.”

What may we say of the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses? In them a reference is made to the past life of those whom Peter addressed as having been sufficient to have done “the will of the Gentiles” by walking in certain evil practices which are here mentioned. The statement is also made that those

who were still engaged in those practices thought strange of the Christians because they did not continue to join with them in those practices. Thus it was, and thus it is, and thus it will be.

What may we say of the 6th verse? In it the Apostle Peter makes reference to the preaching of the Gospel to those who were dead at the time he wrote the letter we are now considering. But in what sense was the Gospel preached to any one before it began to be proclaimed by John the Baptist as “the Gospel of the Kingdom”? In Galatians 3:8 we are informed that the Gospel was preached in prophecy to Abraham, when the declaration was made to him that in his offspring, which referred to Christ, all nations, or families of the earth, should be blessed. Besides the good news to the children of Israel concerning the land of Canaan was declared to be “the gospel” to them (Hebrews 4:2), and many of them were overthrown because they did not accept it with faith. On the same principle all other good news preached unto mankind, in all ages of the world's history, was made known by reason of God's purposes concerning Christ, and, in that sense, such good news may be justly called “the gospel.” The verse now under consideration informs us that such preaching was done in order that those who heard it might be finally judged even as men would be judged who were then living in the flesh, and were permitted to hear “the gospel” in its fulness. To this he added “but live according to God in the spirit,” which means that after the judgment they might have eternal life because they were faithful in accepting such parts of the Gospel, or shadows of the Gospel, as they had opportunity to accept.

What is the bearing of the first part of the 7th verse? The Gospel Age has been fully introduced, and the end will soon come. See Acts 2:17-20.

How does charity cover “the multitude of sins”? If we have “ferveat charity”—earnest charity—toward each other we are disposed to overlook each other's faults to the utmost that the Gospel will permit. Instead of trying to have a brother disciplined for his mistreatment of us we will overlook his weaknesses when they do not show bad character, and go onward in the divine life.

What of the 9th and 10th verses? In them Peter commands Christians to be willing to entertain each other in their homes, and not to do so grudgingly, also that they should be generous toward each other, “as good stewards of the

manifold grace of God.” This implies that they should use their gifts for each other's benefit, as well as to be generous toward each other.

What may we learn by considering the 11th verse of this chapter? We may learn how to proceed in religious teaching so as to establish oneness among all who will accept in its fullness, all that is here declared. We learn also how to proceed so as to maintain the unity of the “ Spirit in the bond of peace” after it has been established among religious people. Finally, we here learn that when such unity is established and maintained it will be to the glory of God “through Jesus Christ.” This scripture is in perfect harmony with the Savior's prayer for oneness, and Paul's exhortation to oneness, as found in John 17:20-23 and 1 Corinthians 1:10. Only by disregard of this scripture, and the others just referred to, have religious people become divided into different sects which dispute with each other in regard to items of doctrine and practice. On the same principle all discussions among disciples have come into existence. Finally, a return to the requirements of this scripture, by all to whom the Bible has come, would result in banishing all false and all erroneous practices from among them. Then, and not till then, will the Savior's prayer for oneness be accomplished among his professed followers.

What of the 12th verse and onward to the end of the 16th? An exhortation is here offered to Christians in regard to “fiery trials,” and how to regard them, also a warning in regard to suffering as an evil doer of any kind, and an assurance of the advantage of suffering as a Christian.

What of the 17th, 18th and 19th verses? In the 17th the apostle declares that the church needed correction. This is indicated in the statement, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.” In 1 Timothy 3:15 the Church is declared to be “the house of God.” In the 12th verse, and onward to the end of the 16th, Peter endeavored to prepare the minds of those whom he addressed for the correction which was needed. In order to separate the hypocrites from the true Christians, and to make true Christians more devoted than they were, “fiery trials” would be necessary, and these are in the 17th verse, declared to be judgments, or the exercise of “judgment.” Thus it was; thus it is; and thus it will be till the end of time. In periods of peace and prosperity many half-hearted converts enter the Church, in a formal manner, and these often develop into vile hypocrites or rank heretics, and in order to prevent them from perverting the entire church “fiery tri-

als” are necessary, so as to separate them from those who are genuine Christians.

What of the last part of this verse? The question here found has a bearing on those who have never obeyed the Gospel. Peter's argument is this: If the Church needs correction in order to save it, what will become of those who have never entered the Church? This is followed by the inquiry, “And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” The bearing of all this is that salvation from sin is very difficult to secure. The Lord has made plain and abundant provisions for salvation, yet because of man's disposition to have his own way, and follow his own inclinations, he can be scarcely saved. This is in direct opposition to the ordinary conclusion among mankind on this subject. That conclusion is that salvation may be easily secured.

What is the difference between the “ungodly” and the “sinner”? In the first division of the Book of Psalms we find the difference indicated. David wrote in that psalm as if the ungodly man is the moral man who is not an outbreking sinner. Some have supposed that he is the one who has gone back from the right way, but the Old Testament and the New have other names for such a character. The former designates him as a “backslider,” and the latter as a “reprobate.” See Proverbs 14:14; Jeremiah 2:19; 3:6 and 2 Corinthians 13:5, 6. The word “reprobate” means, literally, “lacking proof, or without proof.” Therefore, those who lack proof that they are Christians are designated “reprobates.” In view of this we should not make a mistake in regard to the right application of the word “ungodly.” All wrong doers are ungodly, yet those who are generally designated by the word “ungodly” are those whose wrong consists chiefly in omission of duty. They are condemned by James 4:17.

In the last verse of this chapter we find an exhortation to all Christians who “suffer according to the will of God,” to “commit the keeping of their souls” to God, whom Peter declares to be “a faithful Creator.” In this we find consolation which those who suffer certainly need.

CHAPTER V

What is here set forth for our edification? First of all, we find an exhortation to “elders,” and then to the “younger” ones to submit to those who were “elder,” and then an exhortation to all in regard to submitting to each other, and

to humble themselves to the Lord, casting all their care upon him. This is followed by an exhortation to “be sober” and “vigilant,” and the reason for such an exhortation is declared to be on account of the devil whom they should “resist.” The chapter is ended with a record of a prayer, and certain personal mention, and a command in regard to greeting one another, and the Apostolic benediction.

What may we learn by considering the first part of this chapter? That Peter was “an elder,” as well as “a witness of the sufferings of Christ,” we may first learn. Next we may learn that the bearing of his exhortation was that the elders, among those whom he addressed, should “feed the flock of God,” and that they should not take “the oversight” of it “by constraint,” nor “for filthy lucre,” or hire, but “willingly” and “of a ready mind.” From this we may learn what the disposition should now be in those who become overseers of the church. The 3rd verse gives us more information in the same direction. When do overseers become “lords over God's heritage”? When they take all the affairs of the church into their own hands; when they select preachers or dismiss preachers without consulting the congregation; when they exercise discipline and exclude persons without giving them any notice or opportunity to answer for themselves in regard to charges made against them. What should be done with elders of that kind? They should be entreated with reference to their conduct, and if they will not change from it then another step should be taken. The charge that they have been acting the part of “lords over God's heritage” should be drawn up, and specifications should be arranged under it. A mature evangelist should be called to hear the charge and specifications, and to decide upon the case. See 1 Timothy 5:19. A domineering elder is a Diotrephes. See John's 3rd letter, 9th and 10th verses. Elders, in some instances, are chief in establishing churches, and for a long time have nearly everything to do by way of arranging and working, and even in supporting, preachers. As a result, they are liable to continue doing nearly everything, as a matter of habit. But in thus proceeding they do not train the congregation as they should. As a result the members are not developed as they should be. By doing so much themselves they keep the members as children, and when such elders will be taken from them they are liable to be the victims of some unprincipled preacher. Such an elder should be informed of his mistakes, and if he is worthy of the name “elder”, overseer”, he will certainly listen to those who will bring this

matter before him. But if he is a domineering specimen, because he wishes to act the part of a lord over God's heritage, he should be dealt with as has been indicated.

What is set forth in the 4th verse? A statement of the rich reward of those who will have acted the part of scriptural elders, is here set forth.

What of the 1st part of the 5th verse? In it we find an exhortation to younger members of the church in regard to "the elder." They should submit themselves, and not rebel. Does this mean that they should submit like dumb animals? No. They have a right to be informed in regard to the reason for all that they are required to do. But if they cannot understand the reason given they should not rebel, for they may not be old enough in the Church to understand much, or they may have spent their time reading novels instead of studying the Bible. As a result, the reasons that an elder may give to them may not be understood by them, even if they be strictly scriptural. In view of all this we can see the importance of the exhortation that we have been considering, likewise the exhortation found in the latter part of this verse. Self-conceit, arrogance, presumption, and every other outworking of pride, must be suppressed in the church in order to maintain unity and peace. In harmony with this we find the 6th and 7th verses of this chapter.

What of the 7th and 8th verses? In them we are informed of the disposition which should be in Christians because "the devil as a roaring lion walking about, seeking whom he may devour." Does the devil now approach Christians in person? No. He and his angels are held in "chains of darkness" (2 Peter 2:4), so that they cannot appear in person unto Christians. Yet they operate through evil persons, many of whom are very diligent in trying to turn the righteous aside from the right way. But he is most dangerous when he approaches mankind as "an angel of light." See 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. Therefore, we need to be always on our guard against him.

What of the command for Christians to "greet one another with a kiss of charity"? It is like the command to "honor the king," recorded in the 2nd chapter and 17th verse of this letter. Where the king is an established political custom Christians are to honor him, but where the kiss is an established social custom Christians are to observe it, but as a matter of "charity" or love, and not as a mere formality.

What may we say of the letter that we have just consid-

ered as a document? It is both doctrinal and practical, and is an illustration of the kind of spiritual food that the Lord intended his flock to have. In regard to style it is as clear, concise, and dignified as any other part of the Sacred Text, and is, from that viewpoint, worthy of a place in the Inspired Volume.

2nd PETER

CHAPTER I

What is revealed in this part of the Sacred Text? The Apostle Peter here sets forth that which all those who have “obtained like precious faith” with himself should learn concerning that which God's “divine power” has given. In addition to this Peter here sets forth that which all Christians should do, and must do, in order to enter into “the everlasting kingdom.” In view of this Peter declared that he would “not be negligent” in regard to reminding them of that which they already knew, in order that, after his death, they might remember those things. Having set forth all this, the apostle then declared that he had “not followed cunningly devised fables” in that which he had made known to those whom he addressed. The chapter is ended with certain declarations in regard to the certainty of the Inspired Scripture.

What may we say of the 1st verse of this chapter? In Romans 1:16, 17 we learn that “the righteousness of God” is revealed in the Gospel. In view of this we may safely conclude that those whom Peter addressed in this letter had obeyed the Gospel, for they had obtained faith “through the righteousness of God.”

And what of the 3rd verse of this chapter? In that verse we are informed that God by his “divine power has given” to Christians “all things that pertain to life and godliness.” This means that he has not withheld anything from us which pertains “to life and godliness,” and further means that he has not left any defect in the worship or work of the Church for man to supply by his devices. It means likewise that those who have done, or even said, that which implies that the Lord did not give everything to his people that pertains to life and godliness, have been guilty of presumption, and have thereby endangered themselves. But we should consider that the Lord has given the “all things” of which Peter wrote, “through the knowledge of. him that hath called us to glory and virtue,” and this through “the knowledge” of Christ. This does not mean that they have been revealed to those who remain 707

ignorant of that which Christ has offered to them. Though they have been revealed for them, yet they have not received the revelation in its fulness, and this is the secret of all the innovations that have been injected into the worship and work that the Lord has ordained. Ignorance—dense ignorance—wilful ignorance—of much that has been offered to mankind in the Bible—this is the secret of religious innovationism.

What may we say of the 4th verse? In it the apostle declares that the divine purpose is that Christians may become “partakers of the divine nature,” and to accomplish this purpose he has given to them “exceeding great and precious promises.” We are further informed in this verse that the Lord intends that Christians shall escape from “the corruption that is in the world through just.”

What may we learn by considering the 5th verse and onward to the end of the 10th? We may learn of the additions which Christians are required to make to their faith. The first is “virtue,” or correctness of thought and life. The Greek word here translated by the word “virtue” means “goodness, good qualities of any kind, graciousness, uprightness.” In view of these shades of meaning why do many persons say that the word virtue, as here found, means “courage,” and make long speeches on the courage which Christians should manifest? They suffer themselves to be misled by the meaning of the Latin word from which the word “virtue” comes to us.

What kind of “knowledge” did Peter refer to in the 5th and 6th verses? The kind that Christians need in order to know right from wrong, and, thus, to distinguish things that differ. Such knowledge is found in the fulness and purity in the Bible. Therefore the Bible should be studied daily by all Christians.

What is the meaning of the Greek word here translated by the word “temperance”? It means self-control. This being true, it has reference to the use of that which is right in itself. By exercising self-control in the use of right things we avoid making evils of them. Those things that are wrong in themselves should be avoided entirely. See Romans 12:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

What of the patience that is here enjoined? In James 1:2-4 we read of this patience and how it is developed. Paul wrote of it also in Romans 5:3.

What of the “godliness” here mentioned? The Greek word here translated by the word “godliness” means “rever-

ential feeling, piety, devotion” and these shades of meaning indicate that the “godliness” here referred to means such reverence toward God in feeling as will make itself manifest in a life of devotion to God.

And what of the brotherly kindness here commanded? It is that which is referred to in the first letter of Peter, chapter 3:8, 9. The “charity” that is next mentioned bears in the same direction. The Greek word here translated by the word “charity” means “love, generosity, kindly concern, devotedness.” Later translations quite generally render that word in English by the word “love,” and this is, doubtless, the best rendering of it, especially as “love out of a pure heart” is the end which obedience to the divine “commandment” at all times has been intended to accomplish. See 1 Timothy 1:5. It is the end to be accomplished by obedience to every divine commandment, and is the consummation of excellence in the life of the Christian. See I John 4:19.

When are obedient believers “purged from their old sins”? We may learn by considering Acts 2:38, also Romans 6:17, 18. In those scriptures we learn that we were purged when we obeyed the Gospel in its requirements of us as alien sinners.

Does the 10th verse indicate that any Christians need to fall from grace? No. In I Corinthians 10:13 we learn that they shall not be tempted above that which they are able to bear, and here we learn that if they be diligent in doing that which is here enjoined they “shall never fall.” Then the next verse declares that they shall receive an abundant, or full, “entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. “ In view of all this we learn that Christians have strong reasons for rejoicing in the “full assurance of faith.”

What may we say of the apostle's example in reminding his brethren of those things which they already knew? It is a good example for all other elders, and teachers who are not elders, to follow. Yet all teachers should avoid the needless repetition which wearies and annoys. In order to avoid such repetition all who would teach in the congregation should be diligent students of the Bible and should not confine themselves to any one book in the Bible.

What did Peter refer to by the word “tabernacle,” in the 13th and 14th verses? He referred to his body, and by his declaration, “I must put off this my tabernacle,” he referred to his death. This is evident from the 15th verse.

What of the 16th verse and onward to the end of the chapter? In the 16th verse Peter began to introduce his reason for anxiety that his brethren should have those things that he wrote to them “always in remembrance,” even after his departure from this life. That reason he enlarged upon, or amplified, in the 17th verse, likewise, in the 18th and 19th. In that which he here set forth Peter declared the certainty of his testimony by stating that he and others “were eye-witnesses” of the majesty of Christ on the mount when he was transfigured before them. (Matthew 17:1-5.) But after mentioning this certainty he declared that he had “a more sure word of prophecy,” and then referred to the Holy Spirit speaking within him, as is indicated in the 20th and 21st verses. The testimony which he gave concerning that which he saw on the mount was based on the evidence of his eyes and ears. But he wished his readers to understand that he regarded the Spirit that spoke within him as more reliable than his eyes and ears were. The former was outward sight and sound, while the latter was the inward voice of the Holy Spirit. This was the opposite in kind and effect from the feelings of many religious persons that now live and boast of their feelings.

What is the force of the expression, “private interpretation,” as recorded in the last of the 20th verse? The next verse indicates, and Daniel 8:15-26 illustrates, the force of that expression. When the Prophet Daniel did not understand the meaning of a certain vision he had seen and sought to know its meaning, he was not left to his own “private interpretation,” but a certain one was sent to him in order to inform him of its meaning. We find another illustration in Peter's experience at Joppa. See Acts 10:17-20. Peter was not left to private interpretation, nor to his own conclusions in regard to his vision, but by the Holy Spirit its meaning was revealed to him.

In view of all this what may we say to those who would take the Bible away from the common people and keep it in the hands of preachers on the plea that it is not subject to “private interpretation”? They “do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” The Greek word here translated by the word “private” means “one's own,” and this is the true idea in this connection. Besides, the Greek word here translated by the word “is” means “to come into existence, to be created.” This shows that Peter's declaration here is this: “No prophecy of the Scripture was brought into existence by any one's own interpre-

tation.” In perfect harmony with this translation is the explanation given in the last verse.

What should we say to those who consult their own feelings more than they do the finished revelation of the written word of God, and profess to receive new revelations? We should refer them to Jeremiah 23:16-32, and to Ezekiel 13:1-16.

CHAPTER II

What is offered to Bible readers in this chapter? In this chapter the Apostle Peter first offers to his readers certain remarks concerning “false prophets” among the ancients, and “false teachers” among those whom he addressed, and then makes mention of the evil results of their false teaching. He next offers certain remarks concerning God's judgments upon such, even as he judged the angels that sinned, and the world of mankind that existed before the flood, also the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

In connection with that which he offers concerning the world before the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah, Peter mentions the saving of Noah, also the saving of Lot. All this Peter offers as evidence that the Lord “knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.” This is followed by reference to those who “despise government,” and thus may be designated as anarchists, of whom the apostle gives a severe description, comparing them to Balaam, who tried to curse Israel.

In the last part of this chapter Peter informs us that those of whom he gave the mentioned description were once numbered with Christians, even as those were of whom he wrote in the 1st verse of this chapter.

What classes of “false teachers” that now profess to be disciples of Christ correspond most closely to those whom the Apostle Peter describes in the 1st verse of this chapter? Innovators, “higher critics,” so-called, and technical reasoners of all shades and grades, that are connected with the brotherhood known as “Disciples of Christ,” resemble the evil characters of whom Peter here wrote. The declaration, “And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of,” indicates a result which is now very common by reason of those characters of whom mention has just been made. The declaration, “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you,” answers exactly to that which innovators have done.

What of the 4th verse of this chapter? It should be read in connection with Revelation 12:7-9. The Greek word translated by the word "hell" in this verse means a place in the unseen world where wicked spirits are kept. The connection in which that word is here used shows that it is the place where they will be kept "unto judgment," and, therefore, is in the intermediate state for spirits between death and the final judgment. Even the fallen angels have not yet received their final sentence.

What may we say of Peter's argument, as it begins in the 4th verse and continues through the 9th? It is clear and conclusive, and should be satisfactory to all Bible readers. That argument should cause all Christians to be patient because they are by it fully assured that the Lord will in due time overthrow all their ~ enemies.

But what of the expression, "eighth person," as found in the 5th verse? In Jude we find mention made of Enoch as "the 7th from Adam," and this intimates that Noah was of the eighth generation. Do Peter and Jude agree in the counting? Jude's counting includes Adam as the first generation, while Peter begins with Seth, we may suppose.

What may we learn in the 10th and 11th verses? We may learn that the Apostle Peter wrote against all anarchists. As an inspired man he was not afflicted with any sickly sentiment about "freedom of speech." On the contrary, he knew that, as God is a God of order he does not favor anarchy in any department, nor the expression of any anarchial sentiment. Even if a government is not good, and its rulers are under the control of Satan, God does not authorize his people, nor even angels, to bring a "railing accusation against them."

This suggests Jude, 8th, 9th and 10th verses. The archangel did not venture to "bring a railing accusation against" the devil, but called on the Lord to rebuke him. When Christians find it necessary to differ from the government under which they live they should do so respectfully, and thus, in a dignified manner. But those of whom Peter wrote in the 10th verse and onward to the end of the chapter are not respectful to human governments, but "despise" them, and "speak evil of dignities." In the 12th verse and onward to the end of the chapter Peter describes such characters, and in so doing makes a terrible arraignment of them.

Who are they that most closely resemble those of whom the Apostle Peter wrote? If all, or even half, that has been

placed on record against the clergy of the Roman Catholic church is true, then many of that clergy are like the characters of whom the apostle here made an arraignment. They despise all governments except that of their own church, and they speak evil of rulers of civil governments. Anarchists are generally of the Romish faith. Three presidents in the United States have thus far, been assassinated, and each of them was killed by a man of Romish training in early life. Such is the testimony.

In Italy, Spain and Portugal the assassins are generally, if not always, of Roman Catholic training. In Russia they are of the Greek Catholic training. The members of the clergy despise all governments except their own, and some of the members of their churches decide that all governments ought to be despised, and thus they become anarchists.

Who else resemble those of whom Peter wrote? The clergymen of all denominations who oppose the Church of Christ, and, like Balaam, try to curse Israel. The preachers of the "Christian church" are of that class, and so are all others who, after escaping "the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein." Peter says: "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

The 21st and 22nd verses of this chapter indicate that the Apostle Peter had in view those who would turn from the truth in course of that period that the great falling away from the Gospel would occur. Those verses clearly describe to us those disciples who, after obeying the Gospel, turn from it and go after innovations, with all the worldliness connected with them.

CHAPTER III

What may we learn by considering the last chapter of this letter? We may learn that the apostle who wrote it was anxious that his brethren whom he addressed should keep in mind that which they had learned. Next we learn that he made mention of "scoffers" who would arise, and would suppose that because Christ's second coming would be long delayed, therefore, it would never come to pass, and that this they would do because of wilful ignorance of God's record concerning the flood. Then the apostle proceeded to make statements concerning the destruction of the heavens and the earth, in the conflagration of the last day. Next he made mention of the new heavens and earth for which Christians should look, and prepare themselves, by "holy conversation and godliness." Near the end of this chapter

Peter refers to Paul's writings concerning the Lord's coming, and the meaning of his long suffering. In the last verse Peter exhorted those whom he addressed to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.

Do the minds of Christians now need to be stirred by being reminded of the words of the Prophets and Apostles? Yes. Mankind are still liable to forget the divine word, especially in the midst of the cares, anxieties, pressures and toils, of life. In view of this the Church, with its worship and work, has been ordained.

What of those scoffers of whom Peter wrote? In Ecclesiastes 8:11 we read of the disposition of such. To think that whatever is long delayed will never come to pass, is a common weakness in mankind. By reason of that weakness the "scoffers," whom Peter mentioned, concluded that

Christ will never come again. They could not see any signs of His coming in the heavens nor in the earth, neither in the times nor seasons, and, therefore, impatiently concluded that He will never come. But Peter declares that such a conclusion was the result of wilful ignorance of the divine record of destruction of mankind, generally, by the waters of the flood.

What is the secret of all scoffing at the Bible, all use of lightness with reference to it, and all other phases of infidelity, together with all classes and grades of disobedience to it? Wilful ignorance of the Bible is, in Bible lands, the secret of all phases of unbelief and all shades of disobedience with reference to it. Those who understand the Bible have profound reverence for it, and never speak against it. Many who profess to be learned in the things of this world are supposed to understand the Bible because of their human learning. But this supposition is a mistake. Those who have not studied the Bible with care do not understand its teaching, it matters not how much human learning they have. In some instances, the more human learning they obtain the less time and disposition they have for the Bible. Therefore, the most learned men are often the most ignorant of the Bible.

What may we say of the 10th verse? It indicates that we should not measure the Lord's promise to "come quickly" by our ideas of the word "quickly," but should consider that this word with Christ may mean two thousand years or more. This conclusion is indicated by the 9th verse which assures us that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness." Then he as-

sure us that the Lord's purpose in delaying his coming is to give to mankind the best and longest time in which to repent. This is followed by the assurance that "the day of the Lord will come, " and that it will come unexpectedly, "as a thief in the night."

What should we say to those who declare that this earth is not to be destroyed, but is only to be renovated, and that the saints will live on it forever, or, at least, for a thousand years? We should say to them that they "do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." We may say likewise to them that if they will obey 1 Peter 4:11, and, thus, will speak "as the oracles of God," they will cease to say that this earth is not to be destroyed. See the latter part of the 10th verse to the end of the 13th of this chapter.

What is the bearing of the expression "hasting unto the coming of the day of God, " as recorded in the 12th verse? The last part of Revelation 22:20 indicates its meaning. Christ says, " Surely I come quickly," and John answered, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." In other words, John's desire was that the Lord would hasten his coming, and this is the desire of those who are most spiritually minded. They see the oppressions of wickedness, and the slow progress of truth in the hands of men, and they desire the Lord to hasten his coming.

What should we say of "the new heavens, and the new earth," mentioned in the 13th verse? We read thereof in the 21st chapter of Revelation as the final home of the redeemed.

What may we learn by considering the 16th verse? In that verse Peter informs us that those who are "unlearned" are untaught in the Bible, and, as a result, are unsteady, "wrest," or twist, those things which are "hard to be understood," "also the other scriptures unto their own destruction." Are there any of that class now on earth? Yes. All religious sectarians are disposed to twist certain scriptures to suit their sectarian ideas, and then are disposed to twist all the scriptures that are against them so as to break their force. But not all who are members of sectarian churches are really sectarians. Some who are connected with sectarian churches really love God and Christ more than they do sectarian creeds and names. As a result they have some reverence for the Bible, and may be reasoned with concerning its teaching.

What of the 17th and 18th verses of this chapter? The 17th sets forth a warning, based on knowledge, while the 18th

sets forth an exhortation, both of which should be heeded by all Christians. We all need to be careful, and be constantly on our guard, that we be not “led away with the error of the wicked. “ Then, in order to be sure to avoid being “led away” our only safe plan is to study the Bible so as to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” That is to say, by studying the Bible we shall grow in favor with the Lord Jesus by growing in the knowledge of his word. But as growth, in all domains of life, is slow, and is a silent, unseen, unheard, gradual, process, Christians need not expect to grow very rapidly in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Many learn very slowly, but should not, on that account, be discouraged. On the contrary, we should consider the slow growth that is required to make a man, or a woman, of an infant, and should endeavor to learn some part of the Sacred Text every day, as well as refresh our minds in regard to some part of it, and, thereby, make some advancement each day in the divine life.

What may we say of the letter that we have just considered when viewing it in its general teachings? It is both doctrinal and practical. Its dignity and conciseness, plainness and pointedness, show that it is worthy of the Holy Spirit by which it was authorized. The instruction that it offers is an important part of the Sacred Text, for much of it is not covered by any other part of the Sacred writings. It is a necessary addition to the first letter of Peter, and further illustrates the kind of spiritual food that he offered to “ the flock of God. “

1st JOHN

CHAPTER I

Of what does the Apostle John inform us in the 1st chapter of the letter that we now begin to consider? First of all he informs us of the certainty of the testimony that he bore with reference to Christ, and that he gave such information for the “joy” of those he addressed. Next, he informs us of “the message” that he declared concerning God, and of the character of those who “walk in darkness,” also of those who “walk in the light” as Christ is “in the light,” and, finally, he informs us of the character of those who say that they “have no sin,” and encourages Christians to confess their sins.

What of John's declarations concerning the foundation of his testimony in regard to Christ? They are in harmony with Acts 1:3, where we learn that Christ “showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs.” He showed himself to witnesses on the public highway, and sitting at a table (Luke 24:13-31), on the seashore, and by eating before them (John 21:1-13), and on many other occasions in course of a period of forty days. In view of all this John could say, “that which was from the beginning, .which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life . . . declare we unto you, “ and added, “that ye also may have fellowship with us.” Then he declares that his fellowship was “with the Father, and with his Soil Jesus Christ.” To this he adds, that he wrote “these things” to those whom he addressed that their joy might “be full.”

What of the 5th verse? In it John declares “the message * * that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. “ Then in the 6th verse he declares the condition of those who say they have “fellowship” with God, yet “walk in darkness,” and then of those who “walk in the light as He is in the light.” In the 6th verse he further declares of those who “walk in the light as he (God) is in the light,” that they “have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Soil cleanseth” them “from all sin.”

What of the 8th, 9th and 10th verses? In the 8th and 10th verses John declares the character of those who deceive themselves by saying that they “have no sin.” Though all Christians may avoid committing sin as a habit of life, and must avoid the habit of sinning if they would maintain the character of Christians, yet in view of the sin of omission, mentioned in James 4:17, we may find it impossible to avoid sin entirely. In view of this John wrote what is recorded in the 8th and 10th verses. Between these verses he declares, “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. “ Therefore these three verses, as recorded in the last part of this chapter, certainly unite in assuring us that we cannot live in the flesh without sinning, at least, by omission. The time will never come, while we shall remain in the flesh, that we shall be able to do everything that we know to be good, and do it in a faultless manner.

CHAPTER II

What did the Apostle John write in this chapter for our learning? He wrote about sin, and of the provision made for the salvation of Christians from their sins. Then he wrote of knowing God, and of the evidence of knowing him. Next he wrote of keeping the divine word, of abiding in Christ, also of an “old commandment,” and then of a “new commandment.” This is followed by certain statements concerning hatred and love for a brother. Then John stated why he wrote to certain classes of Christians. This is followed by a command against loving the world and the things that are in the world, and the reasons for this command. John then wrote of a character that he designates “antichrist,” and of certain ones who left the church and why they left it. To this he added certain statements about the anointing, which those he addressed had received, and what it had done for them. From this he passed to a description of “antichrist,” and onward to an exhortation to his readers to let that abide in them which they had heard from the beginning. Again the benefit of the anointing which his readers had received is mentioned by John, and this is followed by an exhortation to “abide” in Christ in order that they might “have confidence,” and “not be ashamed before him at his coming.” The chapter is ended with a remark concerning Christ as the “righteous” one, and the relation to him of “every one that doeth righteousness. “

What of the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? In them John wrote against Christians sinning, yet informed his readers of the provision made by the Lord for those Christians who might sin, and do sin. In thus writing he declares that Christ is the “propitiation,” or satisfaction, for our sins, and even “for the sins of the whole world.” Does this imply that all the world will be saved? No. Salvation is universally and unconditionally provided, but it will be conditionally bestowed. See Hebrews 5:8, 9. God has provided salvation for all, but, excepting infants and idiots, he bestows salvation on those only who obey him.

What of the 3rd and 4th verses? In them we are informed in regard to knowing God, and we learn that the question of knowing him is determined at the point of keeping or doing the divine commands. We are here informed, likewise, of the character of those who say they know God but do not keep his commandments. This is followed by a description of the character of him who keeps the divine word, and a statement of that which those “ought” to do who say that they abide in Christ. All this the apostle summed up by declaring that it was “an old commandment,” which they had “from the beginning.” In view of all this, what may we say of every one who says that he knows God, but refuses to be baptized, and to attend to the Lord's supper every first day of the week, or treats with indifference any other divine command? John says of such a person that he “is a liar,” and in Revelation 21:8 this same writer says, “All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.”

But what of the “new commandment,” of which John makes mention? That “new commandment” must consist in that which John declares in regard to hatred and love toward a brother. The teaching here offered is that love for a brother is evidence that he who has it “is in the light,” while hatred for a brother is evidence that he who has it “is in darkness.” But what is the practical evidence of such love or hatred? In chapter 3:17; 5:2, 3, we learn that the love here mentioned is made evident by deeds of mercy toward the one for whom love is professed, and this implies that such love is not determined by thought, or emotion, without merciful deeds.

What may we learn by considering the fact that John wrote to different classes of his readers—fathers, young men, and children—separately, and for a special purpose with reference to each class? We may learn that all other writers

and teachers may do the same. The end in view is edification. See 1 Corinthians 14:26. And as each class needed separate information, he addressed it separately. This is an intimation, and even an implication, in favor of such separation of children, and others, in the home and elsewhere as may be necessary, to impart aright the divine instruction which parents and teachers may now be able to offer to their children and others who may come within their reach. What may we say of the command not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world, and the reasons given for this command? Both the command and the reasons here referred to are in perfect harmony with all else recorded in the Sacred Text, and should be seriously considered by all Christians. In proportion as the love of the world enters the human mind and heart the love of God passes out of it. As it is impossible to serve God and mammon (Luke 16:13) , so it is impossible to love God as we are required to love him, and yet love the world. In view of this John said “If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.” This explains the coldness of many church members. They were never sufficiently converted to see the vanity of the world, and to cease loving it, or after being turned from the love of the world they have gone back to it again. As a result, their houses and lands, their goods and stock, occupy a much higher place in their hearts than the Bible and the Church occupy. As a further result, they are formal rather than fervent in all their religious duties, and in proportion as a church is made up of such members it has a name to live, but is dead., like the church at Sardis, or is so lukewarm that it is disgusting to the Savior, as was the church at Laodicea. See Revelation 3:1, 14-16.

What of the “antichrist” that John mentions in the 18th and 22nd verses? John declares that there were “many antichrists” even at his time on earth, and in the next verse states that they had “gone out from” him, and those who stood with him, because “they were not of” them. This implies that the character of the “antichrists” of whom he wrote was determined by the fact that they turned from John and those who were with him. Here is a revelation for all disciples to consider. Who are they that have turned from the Apostles, and all who have remained steadfast in the truth? Who are they that have gone out from the simplicity that is in Christ, and hurl reproachful names at those who maintain that simplicity? Who are the professed disciples that show more love for sectarians than

for those who show discipleship of the New Testament kind? Correct answers to these questions will enable us to understand who are “antichrists” of this generation. They are not sectarians who have never pretended to stand wholly with the Apostles, but those who have professed to stand with them, yet have left them, or who now profess to be with them, yet show that they love popularity with the world more than they do Apostolic simplicity. These are the “antichrists” of this generation. Certainly they are against Christ.

What shall we say of the 22nd verse, and the description therein given of “antichrist”? That description is the result of that which is set forth in the 19th verse. The first step is to reason in favor of turning from the Apostolic simplicity of the New Testament worship and work, and such reasoning, followed by the kind of reasoning necessary to make a show of defense for turning from that simplicity, will accomplish the denial mentioned in the 22nd verse of this chapter. When false reasoning has been adopted, and reverence has been trifled with; then the conscience becomes seared, and skepticism results. An overt denial of the Father and the Son may never be accomplished, but the condition mentioned in Titus 1:16 is sufficient to insure the character of “antichrist” as here described.

What of the 24th verse? It is as true now as it was when John wrote it, at least in regard to all those who once accepted the truth in its simplicity and fulness. That which was set forth “in the beginning,” when the New Testament was first preached and written, is that which we should be careful to have “remain” in us, for by so doing we “shall continue in the Father and in the Son.” Then, as a reward, we shall have the “eternal life” which God “has promised.

Why did John thus write to those whom he addressed? The answer is recorded in the 26th verse. He wrote thus unto them concerning those that would “seduce” them, or betray them, from the right way.

What of the anointing mentioned in the 27th verse? The Greek word here translated “anointing” is translated by the word “unction” in the 20th verse. Its first meaning is “anything which is applied by smearing,” and, from the fact that ointments were poured or smeared on, the word is here applied to the bestowment of spiritual gifts. In the instances recorded in this chapter reference was made to the gift of “knowledge” as mentioned in I Corinthians

12:8. This is evident from the fact that John stated to them, “And ye know all things”; also, “I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it,” and “The same anointing teacheth You of all things.” These declarations indicate that those whom John addressed had the gift of “knowledge” among them, and perhaps the gift of “wisdom,” with various other gifts, as Paul mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:7-10.

What of the last two verses of this chapter? In them the Apostle John exhorted those whom he addressed to “abide in” Christ, that when he will appear they “may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.” To this he added that “every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.” And this is all applicable to us. But we must not restrict the word “righteousness” to doctrine, on the one hand, nor to practice, on the other. Those who are born of God are children of God, and God's children are righteous in both doctrine and practice. Yes, even in name they are righteous.

CHAPTER III

What is here set forth for our edification? First of all, John here wrote concerning the love of God, which grants unto men and women to be called “the sons of God,” and then wrote of the hope which “the sons of God” have, also of that which this hope will cause those who have it to do. Next he wrote of the sin of commission, and of those who are born of God, and their freedom from this sin. This is followed by certain remarks concerning the doing of righteousness, from which the apostle passed to the subject of the love which Christians should have for each other, and gave to those he addressed a precaution to avoid the example of Cain. Next we find the subject of hatred introduced and considered, from which the apostle returned to the subject of love, and its evidence among Christians by deeds of mercy. The subject of the heart is next introduced, and its manifestations in assurance and condemnation. In conclusion the apostle mentions “confidence toward God,” making requests of him, and the conditions of receiving what we ask for, after which he mentions belief, love, and showing it by keeping the commandments. The chapter is ended with a declaration concerning the indwelling of the Spirit.

What may we say of the first three verses of this chapter? In the 1st verse the Apostle John wrote as if he was filled

with wonder that God should so highly exalt mankind as to give them the privilege of being called “the sons of God.” In the 2nd verse he wrote as if the prospects of “the sons of God” are greater than can be set forth, even in appearance, in this life. In the 3rd verse he wrote of these prospects as a “hope,” and declares that every one who has this hope will purify himself, even as God is pure.

What may we say of the 4th, verse? In this verse the apostle defines a certain kind of sin—the sin of commission, which consists of transgressing, or going beyond, that which is set forth in the divine law, as well as doing what is forbidden by that law. In Deuteronomy 17:2,3 we learn that those transgressed who went beyond that which the Lord had enjoined, even as those transgress who violate a plain restriction. This shows that every command rules out that which is not commanded. Thus the command to worship God implied that man is not to worship any other being, and the command forbidding the worship of all other beings implies that man should worship God. Thus the command to be sober implies that drunkenness is a sin, and the command forbidding drunkenness implies that mankind should be sober. On the same principle the command addressed to Christians to teach and admonish in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, implies that we are not to try to teach by the use of musical instruments, nor by any other method which is not elsewhere required nor permitted in the law to Christians. This is on the same principle that the command to pray to the Father, in the name of Christ, implies that we should not pray to him in the name of any one else, as we do not find the name of any one else mentioned as a name through which to approach the Father. This indicates that the verse now under consideration is certainly against the use of musical instruments in the worship of God through Christ, for they cannot be used except by those who use them being guilty of going beyond the divine record that is given to regulate Christians.

What of the 5th verse? In it we find two declarations, first, that Christ was “manifested to take away our sins,” and, second, “in him is no sin.” In the next verse John adds that, “whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.” This last declaration is then considered by the apostle down to the end of the 10th verse, though it is self-evident to all who will consider it aright. We cannot abide in Christ and yet sin, because “in him is no sin.” This implies that every sin that any Christian commits is outside of Christ, or away from him, for “in him is no sin.” To abide in him, and yet

be guilty of sin, is an impossibility. In his 2nd letter and 9th verse this is stated in the clearest manner, both negatively and affirmatively. But this is not all. The words “abideth” and “sinneth” as found in this 6th verse show that John wrote with reference to a continuous something in each instance. Certainly he did not refer, on the one hand, to an incidental abiding in Christ, nor, on the other hand, to an incidental sinning. But he wrote, in both instances, of a continuance, or habit of life. In Galatians 6:1 we learn something of the provision made for an incidental sin, even a sin of commission. The same is true of James 5:19, 20. That the word “sinneth” here refers to a habit of life is further evident from its use in the 8th verse in connection with mention of the devil, of whom the statement is made that he “sinneth from the beginning.”

But what of the 9th verse? The first part of it is clear in view of that which has been already set forth on this subject. He that is born of God does not commit sin as a habit of life. Then the second part of this verse is clear. The Word of God is the seed of the kingdom. (Mark 4:14.) But what of the last part of this verse? The word “sin” as here found should be considered in the light of all that is recorded in this connection. That which precedes should be considered, also that which follows. In the next verse we read, “Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” All this shows that John was not writing concerning an incidental act either in regard to sin or righteousness. We may therefore read the last part of the 9th verse thus, “and he cannot sin [continuously or as a habit of life] because he is born of God. “

But what should we say to those who ignore the connection, and insist that “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin” even incidentally, and that “he cannot sin” even occasionally, nor at any time, nor under any circumstances? We should regard all such as hobbyists who will strain one scripture so that they will ignore many others. In order to justify a theory they so apply one scripture as to act the part of infidels concerning many others that bear on the same subject. Yet even such can be confuted by taking them on their false basis. A certain lady said, “I cannot take part in any such exercises for I am a Christian.” This did not mean that to take part in the exercises referred to was a physical impossibility, but that it was impossible from a moral or religious viewpoint. A certain man when questioned on the subject said, “No, I cannot kill my daugh-

ter—not while I have the right use of my reason.” He did not mean that it was a physical impossibility for him to kill his child, but that it was morally impossible for him to do so. On the same principle it is morally and religiously impossible for any Christian to deny the divinity of Christ, or to commit any other sin in deliberate and determined manner.

What is set forth in the 10th, 11th and 12th verses? In the 10th verse John mentions the two standards by which “the children of God” and “the children of the devil” are known. In the 11th verse he mentions “the message” that Christians “should love one another.” Then in the 12th verse he makes mention of Cain who slew his brother “because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.” From this we may learn the secret of all other religious persecutions. Evil workers persecute those who are better than themselves. This is the rule, but it may have a few exceptions. Sometimes two sectarian churches that are equally unscriptural will persecute each other.

What of the 14th and 15th verses? In the 14th verse the love of brethren is an evidence of having “passed from death unto life,” but in chapter 5:2 we learn that to love the brethren, or “children of God,” means to “love God and keep his commandments.” Then in the 15th verse we learn that the Gospel is more strict than the Jewish law was in regard to the character of a murderer. Under the law those only were adjudged as murderers who had taken the life of a human being, but in the Gospel Age the character of a murderer is determined by hatred without taking life.

What of the 16th verse? It mentions the severest test of our love for our brethren. As Christ laid down his life for us so we are informed that we “ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

What of the 17th and 18th verses? In them the practical test of our love for God is mentioned. John reasons as if the love of God does not dwell in those who will not help a brother in distress, and exhorts his readers not to love “in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.”

What of the 19th, 20th and 21st verses? In these verses John reasons to the effect that by doing deeds of mercy to needy brethren we assure our hearts before God, and intimates that if we do not such deeds our hearts will condemn us, and then states that “if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” In thus writing did John mean that if the heart of a man who has not obeyed

the Gospel, and thus has not been born of God by being “born of water and of the Spirit,” does not condemn him, therefore he has reason for “confidence toward God”? No. He did not write concerning such a man, but he wrote of him who had obeyed the Gospel and had, thereby, become a child of God.

What should we say to those who say that beyond God's commands many things “are pleasing in his sight,” and that they axe left to choose, and decide upon such things? All who reason thus forget 1 Peter 4:11, and many other scriptures, especially 2 Peter 1:3.

What is set forth in the 23rd and 24th verses? In the 23rd we find mention made of God's “commandment” to “believe on the name” of Christ and “to love one another.” In the 24th mention is made of obedience to that command, as evidence that we dwell in God and he dwells in us. Finally, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is mentioned as evidence in the same direction.

CHAPTER IV

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are first informed that Christians should not believe every spirit, but should try every one of them, and the standard by which we should try them is mentioned. That those whom John addressed were of God, is next mentioned, also a difference between them and the world, and the test by which those who were of God might be known. Then the apostle introduced the subject of love, and continued to write of it through the remainder of the chapter.

What was the spirit of “antichrist” that showed itself while the Apostle John was still on the earth in person? It was the disposition to deny the humanity of Christ. And how does that spirit now manifest itself? It denies the divinity of Christ, either by direct denial, or by a denial that is indirect, or implied. This indirect denial is evident by the, human devices that are added to the Gospel in order to make it popular, but under the plea of making it effective. All who add such devices imply that Christ is not the Sort of God because they imply that he did not know how to adjust His Gospel to all ages, and all conditions of mankind. When the Jews tampered with the divine arrangement God charged them with impeaching his wisdom. See Isaiah 29:16. And what is it but an impeachment of Christ's wisdom, and thus of his divinity, to do, or even to say? that which implies that he did not know how to adapt his

Gospel to mankind at all times and all circumstances? Sectarians and innovators of every cast and shade should consider this with fear and trembling.

What of the 4th, 5th and 6th verses? The assurance which John gave to Christians in regard to loving God, and having overcome the “antichrist,” or “false prophets,” that should come into the world, is set forth in the 4th verse. Also the assurance that they had overcome because he that was in them was greater than he that was in the world. This means that Christ is greater than the devil. In the 5th verse John informs us that the “false prophets” of whom he wrote were “of the world,” and therefore the world heard them. As it was then, so it is now, and so it will be till the end. Then in the 6th verse John declared of himself “we are of God,” and added, “He that knoweth God heareth us; he that knoweth not God heareth not us.” Finally he declared, “Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” May that test be safely applied now? Yes, and by it we may learn the difference between the sectarians and those who are true believers in sectarian churches. The genuine sectarians will not hear with patience, nor read with care, that which any apostle, or inspired evangelist, has written, that condemns their theories or practices. But those of sectarian churches who are true believers in Christ will consent to hear some one read, and will themselves read, any part of the Sacred Text, and they will consider it with care. “Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

What of the 7th verse and onward to the end of the chapter? It is a discussion of the subject of love in its Godward and manward bearings. Love for brethren, as an evidence of being “born of God,” and knowing God, is mentioned in the 7th verse. The reverse of the 7th verse, in regard to knowing God, is declared in the 8th. God's love in the gift of his Son for us is declared in the 9th verse, and the 10th verse is on the same order. In the 11th verse God's love for us is mentioned as a reason that we should “love one another.” Our love for each other as evidence that “God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us,” is set forth in the 12th verse. The indwelling of the Spirit is mentioned in the 13th verse as evidence that we dwell in God and he dwelleth in us. That the Father sent the Son into the world, is the theme of the 14th verse, and in the 15th mention is made of confession of faith in Christ as an evidence of God dwelling in the one who makes

the confession. In applying this verse care should be taken to avoid the idea of confession only, or alone, being an evidence of God's presence in a person. Besides, in Matthew 7:21, we learn that confession without obedience is not acceptable to God.

In the 16th verse we are informed that "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," and in the 17th that "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." But what is the bearing of the declaration, "Because as He is so are we in the world"? In chapter 3:13 we learn that Christians are not to be surprised if the world "hate" them, and in John 15:18,19 we learn that the world hated Christ before it hated us, and this indicates that John here meant to say that, as God is hated in the world so are Christians hated in the world.

In the 18th verse John refers to the relationship between love and fear, and says that "perfect love casteth out fear." But in 1 Peter 2:17 we learn that Christians are commanded to "fear God." Therefore John did not mean to say that "perfect love" casts out the fear of God. In view of this we are left to conclude that the fear here mentioned by John is the fear of the world, which certainly has "torment" connected with it. In proportion as mankind fear the world in its gaze and criticisms they are certainly in torment.

What of the 19th verse? In it we find mention made of the end which God had in view when he created man, and placed him on earth as the chief earthly ruler, and subjected him to temptation. He desired beings in his own image who would love him because he first loved them. In order to accomplish this end he placed man on trial in the garden of Eden, and on the outside of that garden, before the flood and after the flood, in the Patriarchal Age, and the Jewish Age, and the Gospel Age. He desires to convince man that He is his best friend, and, thereby, to win his love. By reading the Bible we find three great reasons which should cause men to love God supremely. The first consists in that which God did for man in creation; the second consists of that which God has done for man in providence, and the third consists of that which God has done for him in redemption. This third reason is specially mentioned as our reason for loving God. He requires man to consider His goodness, as shown in all he has done for him, and thereby to find reason for praising and loving him supremely. When man breaks down in his rebellion

against God and says, "It is enough; I love God because he first loved me," then the divinely appointed end which God had in view when he created man, and placed him on trial, is accomplished.

What is recorded in the 20th and 21st verses? The record, in these verses, reveals the relation between a man loving God and loving his brother, and John here declares that "he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" In view of this what may we say of those who despise their own brethren, or those whom they profess to regard as brethren, and yet profess to love God? And what shall we say of those who profess to love the heathen whom they have not seen, yet despise those whom they have seen that cling most closely to the Gospel, and whom they sometimes speak of as brethren? John sums up this chapter by declaring that he had this commandment from God, "That he who loveth God loveth his brother also." Why did the Holy Spirit offer so much in regard to Christians loving each other? First, because God has ordained that brethren in Christ shall love each other, and, second, because such brethren are, in many instances, not very lovable. Many of them have natural dispositions which are very objectionable to us, or they have formed some habits that repel rather than attract. Besides, some of them hold opinions which they are disposed to advance, and may be very contentious in regard to them, or they may get so close to us, personally, in a discussion that their bad breath is more objectionable than their erroneous opinions. Therefore, John's argument about loving brethren is very important. But the greatest reason that brethren should love each other is set forth in Matthew 25:40, and in 1 Corinthians 8:12, 13.

CHAPTER V

Of what did John write in this chapter? He wrote first of faith in Christ, and then of love for God and the brethren, also of the practical test of love for the brethren and for God. Then he wrote of overcoming the world by faith, also wrote of Christ, and of three that bear record in heaven, and of three that bear record on earth. Next he wrote of a difference between the witness of men and the witness of God. He wrote also of the witness which a man may have in himself. The question of eternal life is next brought before us in this chapter, and the relation of Christ to our eternal life. This is followed by a statement concerning

the confidence which Christians have when they pray to God, and by mention of two kinds of sins, of the relation between being born of God and sinning. The chapter is continued with a statement of the full assurance which John had with reference to being of God, and this is followed by a statement of the wicked conditions of the world, also a statement concerning the understanding that God has given to Christians. In the conclusion of this chapter John commanded those whom he addressed to keep themselves “from idols.”

What of the 1st verse of this chapter? The belief that is here mentioned was certainly not of the kind nor degree that is mentioned in John 12:42, 43. Such belief, or degree of belief, was certainly not sufficient to bring men into the kingdom of God, so that they were indeed “born of God.” But the belief, or faith, that brings those who have it into the kingdom of God is illustrated in Hebrews 11th chapter. It is a wholehearted faith which impels those who have it to do the divine will, regardless of that which man may say or do.

To whom does the word “begat,” in the last of this verse, apply? In James 1:18 we find the answer to this question. John here declares that he that loves God, that “begat” persons by the word of truth, loves those also who are “begotten of him.” And thus John has again introduced the subject of love, which he continues in the next two verses by making mention of the practical test of that love.

In the 2nd verse he declares that the certain practical test of loving the children of God is that “we love God and keep his commandments.” To this he adds that the practical test of loving God is “that we keep his commandments,” and assures us that “his commandments are not grievous.” In the light of these scriptures we must conclude that love for God and love for the children of God are not mere sentiments, nor theories, but they are practical, living realities, which are made evident in keeping the divine commandments.

What may we learn by considering the 4th and 5th verses? We may learn that which would have saved the Church, in all ages, if it had been considered aright. Faith—the faith which works by love (Galatians 5:6)—is the power that was intended to enable Christians to overcome the world. This faith will cause Christians to study the Bible to the utmost that their time, health, and other circumstances “ill permit. It will cause them to hold close com-

munion with God and Christ, and thereby save themselves from the love of the world. In order that they may understand the Bible their faith will cause them to study their own language first, so as to know the meaning and value of the words and sentences found in the Bible. This faith will, in many instances, cause them to study other languages, especially those in which the Bible was originally written, in order that they may know exactly the ideas intended to be conveyed by the inspired writers. Besides, this faith will cause Christians to meet for worship in private houses until they can find a more commodious place in which to assemble. It will cause them to be diligent in business, and to practice economy in order that they may have money to buy lots and build meeting houses, when by so doing they can avoid violating the Savior's principle of economy as set forth in John 6:12. The faith which works by love will first cause alien sinners, who have it, to repent, confess, and be baptized. It will then cause them to do all else that the Lord requires of them in order to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It is the opposite of the presumption which works by love of popularity, and hatred of those who oppose popular methods. Faith has full confidence in the divine arrangements, and never tries to improve on them in either worship or work. In the 5th verse before us the Apostle John implies that only those overcome the world who believe "that Jesus is the Son of God." But the belief of which he wrote is the "faith which worketh by love," and such faith will not venture beyond divine testimony, and thus enter the domain of presumption. Therefore, it will not introduce musical instruments into the worship, neither will it adopt colleges, nor missionary societies, nor any other human device, in the work of the Church. But it will cause those who possess it to regard themselves as bound up, and down, and in, and under, to the divine testimony, being fully satisfied that God's divine power has given unto them "all things that pertain to life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3.)

What may we say of the 6th verse? The "water and blood" mentioned in this verse are so connected as to suggest John 19:34, as its explanation. The Apostle John is the only one of the inspired writers who mentioned that both water and blood issued from the Savior's side when a soldier's spear was thrust into it, and he is the only one who declares that Jesus came "by water and blood." The fact that he mentions "water and blood" twice in this verse is signifi-

cant. The Greek word here translated by the word “came” means “to come, to go, to pass,” and in view of these shades of meaning we may safely say that Jesus has come to us, as our Savior, by his death, and thus, by the water and blood that issued from his pierced side. This is further indicated by the statement, “and it is the Spirit that beareth witness.” In John 19:34 the Spirit bore witness in regard to the “water and blood” that issued from the Savior's side. But may we not say that the word “water” in this connection refers to the Savior's baptism in the river Jordan? Yes, we may say it, but not according to divine testimony, and the Apostle Peter says, “If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God.” (1 Peter 4:11.) Those oracles do not in any place, except in John 19:34, connect the words “water and blood,” or “blood and water,” as they are here connected. Therefore we should conclude that the expression “water and blood,” as here connected, certainly refers to the “blood and water” which issued from the Savior's side, as mentioned in John 19:34. If further evidence would be needed we might refer to the fact that John was the only witness who wrote of Christ as “the Word,” and here he refers to him as “the Word.” This indicates, or, at least, intimates that when he wrote of “water and blood” he was referring to his own testimony as an inspired writer, and thus was referring to John 19:34.

What of the 7th and 8th verses? One, or both, of these verses, may be regarded as interpolations by some critics of the original text, yet these verses may be safely considered, as they are in harmony with all else that is found in the testimony concerning Christ. In John 1:1, 14 this same writer wrote of Christ as “the Word,” and in this 7th verse he again writes of him as “the Word.” Therefore this verse declares that God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, are the united witnesses which are in heaven. Then in the 8th verse we find that the Spirit, and the “water and the blood,” are the united witnesses which testify on earth. The Spirit furnishes the record, while “the water and the blood,” which issued from the Savior's side when it was pierced, testify that he died for mankind.

What of the 9th verse? In it we find a comparison between the witness of men, and the witness of God, and the argument is that as we do receive the witness of men so we ought to receive the witness of God which is much “greater” than that of men.

What of the 10th verse? John here declares the conscious-

ness of believing in Christ, and the reflection against God by not believing in him. The same reflection is cast against God by those who profess to believe the divine record, but show by the innovations, or human devices, they adopt in the worship and work of the Church that they lack confidence in the completeness, or sufficiency, of that record. This implies unbelief, or lack of faith.

What do we find in the 11th, 12th and 13th verses of this chapter? In them we find mention made of “eternal life,” and the evidence which God has given of such life as it consists in believing in Christ. But the believing here mentioned is certainly a living, active, faith which moves those who possess it to do the divine will.

What of the 14th verse? The Apostle John here mentions the extent to which Christians may scripturally expect their prayer to be answered. As the Savior said in the Garden of Gethsemane so we should say in connection with all prayers, namely, “Not my will, but thine be done.” (Luke 22:42.) A wise and good earthly father will not give to his son that which will do him harm, and, certainly, our wise and kind heavenly Father will not answer our prayers, if, by so doing, he would injure us. The 15th verse of this chapter may be regarded as a comment on the 14th, and should. always be considered in connection with it.

What may we say of the 16th and 17th verses? In them we find mention made of “a sin unto death,” but as “the second death” is not mentioned we should not suffer our thoughts to contemplate that death. Ananias and his wife sinned a sin which was “unto death.” See Acts 5th chapter. So did Herod. See Acts 12:21-23. Those were days of special judgment for sin, and some so sinned that God inflicted the death penalty on them. If Ananias had been smitten by an angel, and had died gradually, instead of suddenly, then Peter could have seen that he had sinned “a sin unto death,” and concerning such sin John here says, “I do not say he shall pray for it.” In the 17th verse John says, “All unrighteousness is sin,” and this implies that all unfairness is sin, whether the unfairness of which one is guilty is toward man or God. This being true, all who withhold from man what is due to him are sinners, likewise all who withhold from God that which is due to him. In view of this, what must we conclude concerning all who fail to give into the Lord's treasury as they have been prospered? They are certainly sinners. Besides, as Ananias “lied * * unto God” when he withheld a part of that which he pretended to give, so all those are guilty of

lying unto God who withhold a part of that which they pretend to give into the Lord's treasury.

What of the last four verses of this chapter? In the 18th John declares that those who are “born of God” do not sin—as a habit of life—but that they keep themselves, and the devil touches them not. This suggests John 14:30. Satan could not touch the Savior, because he could not find anything in him like unto evil that is in himself. On the same principle, John here declares that the “wicked one” “toucheth him not” who “keepeth himself.” The devil cannot touch Christians if they do not, in any measure or degree, have evil in their thoughts, emotions, or actions. He cannot form a connection between them and himself if they keep themselves pure in life, in feeling, and ill thought.

That which is said in the 19th verse is still true. All Christians “are of God,” and the “whole world lieth in wickedness.” Nor will any great change be made till Christ will come again. Enthusiasts may try to “take the world for Christ,” but their compromised methods show that they are rather trying to betray the Church to the devil.

In the 20th verse John mentioned his knowledge as well as his faith. He had seen Jesus in the flesh, had heard him, and handled him. Therefore he could say more positively than we can, “We know that the Son of God is come.” Yet our assurance concerning Christ is so strong that it may, in one sense, be spoken of as knowledge.

Why did John command those whom he addressed to keep themselves from idols? When we consider that “covetousness is idolatry” (Colossians 3:5), we may understand why he thus commanded. Besides, in Ezekiel 14:2 we read of certain men who had “set up their idols in their heart,” and this indicates that Christians may now do the same. In order to be idolaters they do not need to make an image, and bow down to it. All they need to do is to cherish some object, or commodity, or position, above God, and they become idolaters by so doing. This indicates the real character, in heaven's sight, of all who separate themselves from Christians for the sake of innovations in the worship and work of the Church.

What may we say of the letter which we have just considered, when viewed as a document? It is both doctrinal and practical. The chief items of doctrine therein set forth are faith and love, and these are both considered in their practical bearings. This is specially true of love,

What is set forth in this letter? The Apostle John, in this letter, addressed a certain woman and her children, in which he expressed his love for her and them, “in the truth,” and this he declared that he did “for truth's sake.” He expressed his joy also that he had found of her children “walking in truth,” and his desire that he and she should “love one another,” but declared that the love he referred to consisted in walking after God's “commandments,” as they had heard “from the beginning.” As a reason for this writing he stated that “many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.” Such a deceiver he declared to be “an antichrist.” This is followed by an exhortation in favor of receiving “a full reward.” The effect of transgressing is next mentioned, also of abiding in the doctrine of Christ. To this the apostle added instruction in regard to those who would “bring not this doctrine,” and the danger of bidding them “God-speed.” The statement is next recorded that John had more to say to the one he addressed, but he would not write “with paper and ink,” for he trusted that he might see her “face to face.” The letter is ended with mention of another woman of whom John wrote as the “elect sister” of the one whom he addressed.

What evidence have we that John was addressing some woman in the Church, and not a church as such? The fact that his style was the same when he began his next letter which was addressed to a man named Gaius, is evidence in this direction. Besides, the Greek word here translated “lady” is the feminine form of the word which means “lord, master,” also “owner, possessor.”

What may we say of the first part of this letter to the end of the 6th verse? It is a repetition of that which John wrote in his first letter concerning love, and that obedience to the divine commands is the evidence of love.

What of the 7th verse? In it the apostle, whose words we are considering, made mention of those deceivers who denied that Christ had come in the flesh. All Jews who did not believe in the divinity of Christ, with all who denied 735

his human nature, were of that class. The same is still true of the Jews who reject Christ, and of all others who deny the human nature of our Savior's body. The spirit of "anti-Christ" is to deny Christ, either in his humanity or his divinity, or in both. To deny the completeness of his Gospel, either in its requirements of alien sinners, or of Christians, is of the same order. It is opposition to Christ, and is anti-Christ. In view of all this we can understand the exhortation, and precaution, given in the 8th verse. That exhortation and precaution are on the order of that which we find in Colossians 2:8,18. All Christians now need to look to themselves that they "lose not those things" which they have wrought, and to be careful that they may "receive a full reward."

What of the 9th verse? The Apostle John here mentions the spiritual condition of him who transgresseth, and, thereby, "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ." He says of him that he "bath not God." The Greek word here translated bath means "to hold, to seize, possess; be affected by, subjected to." In view of these shades of meaning of that word we can understand that John declared "whosoever transgresses, and abides not in the doctrine of Christ, is not subject to Cod." The meaning of this declaration, when thus translated, is evident as soon as stated, and it declares the condition of all who transgress the law of Christ. They do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, and are not subject to him, On the contrary, they are in opposition to him, and their condition borders on that of "anti-Christ." But those who abide in the doctrine of Christ are subject to "the Father and the Son." In view of all this what may we say of the innovators of all ages, who try to make improvements on God's plan of converting sinners and perfecting believers? They transgress, and do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, and are not subject to the Father and the Son. Their condition is not only dangerous, but it is condemnable—ruinous to themselves and to all who believe them.

What of the 10th and 11th verses? In them the Apostle John informs Christians how they should. treat such characters, and why. That is to say, they should not receive such into their "house," nor bid them "God-speed , " lest they become partakers of their "evil deeds." But what "house" is here referred to? As John does not say what house we would better not say. As a result we should not receive them into our own private houses, nor into our meeting-houses. If they will come to our meeting-houses

on a general invitation, with others, and behave themselves, we shall not have any right to put them out. But we should be careful not to ask them to take any part in our meetings, nor to offer thanks at our table, nor recognize them as brethren. In many instances we may find that public sentiment will be against us if we obey the directions here given, but we should not, on that account, shrink from them. They are safe, and by acting according to them we are sure of pleasing God, and we avoid making a compromise of the Gospel in the estimation of those who behold us. They may censure us for being exclusive, but when they will learn that we are acting according to divine instructions they will, generally, give us credit for sincerity.

The 12th verse of this letter indicates something of the joy that Christians have in talking with each other.

3rd JOHN

What is here set forth for our learning? In this letter John addressed one of his brethren named Gaius concerning his health, and mentioned to him his own joy when he had learned of the truth that was in him, and of his faithfulness also of his charity toward certain brethren. Then John made mention of the fact that he had written to the church, but a certain man, named Diotrephes, did not receive him. Then he stated that he would remember Diotrephes and his works, also that he did not receive “the brethren,” and that he mistreated those who would receive them. This is followed by an exhortation, with an explanation, also by favorable mention of a man named Demetrius. The letter is ended with a remark about John's prospect of seeing Gains, a benediction of peace, and mention of “ friends.”

What of the first part of this letter? The 4th verse is specially worthy of comment. The apostle had no greater joy than to learn that those who had obeyed the Gospel under his labors were walking “in truth.” The same is true of all Gospel preachers who are wholehearted in their work.

What of the 5th and 6th verses? In them the apostle wrote with reference to Gains in a manner which should encourage all Christians to follow his example as here mentioned. “Thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers.” This is a high commendation, and the evidence of it is mentioned in the first part of the 6th verse. The last part of that verse intimates that Gaius should do more good to “the brethren.” All Christians should consider this, and follow the example of Gaius. To do so will, at times, cause them some inconvenience, yet they will, thereby, be commended by the word of God, even as Gaius was.

What is indicated in the 7th and 8th verses? In the 7th verse John referred to those preachers of Christ* who preached the Gospel without charge among the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas did this, at times (1 Corinthians 9:1-6), and others may have done the same. Then, in the 8th verse, John declared, “We therefore ought to receive such, that

we might be fellow helpers to the truth.” Here is another consideration for all Christians. By taking care of and, thus, by supporting, true preachers of Christ, all Christians may become “fellow helpers to the truth.”

What may we learn by considering the character of Diotrephes as described in the 9th and 10th verses? We may learn that he was a bold, bad man, just the kind to cause trouble in any church. His desire for pre-eminence, or high position, caused him to refuse to receive the Apostle John's letter to the church. Besides, he was guilty of “prating against” the apostle with “malicious words,” and not only did not “receive the brethren,” but was guilty of forbidding “them that would” receive them, and actually cast “out of the church” those who did receive “the brethren.” In all this he showed himself to be a bold, bad man, whose love of prominence caused him to act the part of a lord over God's heritage. But the Apostle John did not intend to allow him to go onward in such misconduct. But this question arises: If the Apostle John, as an inspired man, of faultless spirit, as he is supposed to have manifested, could not escape the “malicious words” of the ancient Diotrephes, how can any one now escape such words from a modern Diotrephes? The Diotrephes of whom John wrote may have been educated, and may have pretended to be pious, and when he spoke concerning religion, or sang, or prayed, he may have rolled his eyes upward in strict sanctimonious style. But his love of position and prominence caused him to act the part of a slanderer of the Apostle John, and a persecutor of those who were better than himself. The same is true of many in modern times. Their love of preeminence causes them to show themselves as bold, bad men, whose venom even against those who imitate the Apostle John cannot escape. Innovators, and technical reasoners, of all shades and grades, among disciples of Christ, are generally possessed of uncontrolled self-esteem, and they love to have “the pre-eminence.” As a result they become slanderers and persecutors of those who are better than themselves.

What of the exhortation in the 11th verse of this chapter? It should be seriously considered, and observed, by all Christians, every day throughout their earthly pilgrimage.

What may we say of Demetrius? The fact that he had a “good report of all,” is evidence that he was an exception. But the word “all,” in this instance, does not refer to all of the wicked. If he had crossed the path of Diotrephes he would not likely have had a “good report of all,” “ in

the unmodified sense of the word “all.”

The apostle's benediction of “peace,” in the close of this letter, and his mention of the “friends,” together indicate his considerateness, and sets before us an example which we should follow in all departments of life. We should be considerate.

JUDE

What has the Apostle Jude set forth for our consideration? After stating who he was, and after addressing those to whom he wrote as “sanctified” ones, he made mention of the “diligence” with which he had written to them because it was “needful” for him to write and to exhort them. Then he stated that the reason it was needful for him to write thus to them was because of “certain men” who had “crept in unawares,” and then he gave a description of those men, and arraigned them on charges of a grievous kind. In connection with the mentioned description and arraignment this apostle referred to the overthrow of disobedient Israelites in the wilderness, also to the divine judgment on the angels that had sinned, and to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Near the end of this letter we find a reference to the words of the Apostles concerning the evil characters of whom he wrote. Near the conclusion of this letter we find an exhortation, and, as a conclusion, we find a benediction, that is in regard to dignity and grandeur worthy of the divine origin.

What does the word “sanctified,” as recorded in the 1st verse of this chapter, refer to? The Old Testament and the New unite in the idea that to be “sanctified” means to be set apart to a special use, especially a sacred use. In this sense all Christians are sanctified.

What is referred to by the expression “common salvation,” as recorded in the 3rd verse? In Titus 1:4 we read of “the common faith.” The Greek word here translated by the word “common” means “belonging equally to several,” as when the church had “all things common.” See Acts 2:44. The idea then is that “the common faith” and the “common salvation” referred to that which was intended for all who would accept it. This idea is confirmed by the expression “the faith which was once delivered to the saints.” It was intended for them all, and having been “once delivered” it was delivered for all time. The Greek word here translated “once” means also, “once for all, actually, in fact.” In view of these shades of meaning certain later translations of the Sacred Text use the expression “once for all.” This is satisfactory, and implies that

the Lord did not intend, at some future date, to deliver it again, nor make a restatement of it, nor to add to it.

What is revealed in the 4th verse? This verse suggests Galatians 2:4, also 2 Peter 2:1. The general charge made against certain persons in this verse is that they were “ungodly men,” and the specifications under that charge are that they were guilty of “turning the grace of God into lasciviousness [licentiousness], and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Why should such men make a profession of faith and, even in a formal manner, enter the Church? For the same reason that they do now enter it in a formal manner. In many instances they have some religious desires, but those desires are not sufficient to control their earthward inclinations. They are not fully converted to Christ, and, in many instances, they are not even half-converted. Yet they may like a certain preacher who does not exercise due care in denouncing all ungodliness. But why should such men cling to the Church after they deny God and Christ? In Titus 1:16 we are informed of those who “profess that they know God, but in works they deny him. “ Therefore we should not conclude that those to whom Jude referred were outspoken infidels. Moses and Aaron were charged with not believing God, and even with rebellion against his word because they made on unadvised speech. See Numbers 20:12,24; Psalm 106:32, 33. Besides, the Jews were charged with unbelief in Me wilderness. See Hebrews 3:18, 19, also the last of the 5th verse of this letter. In view of all this we need not to suppose that those “certain men,” to whom Jude referred, were atheists, nor even deists, but they were “ungodly men,” who denied, by implication, the value of the divine word, or denied that it was sufficient to accomplish the conversion of the world or the perfection of the Church. Thus, at least, they likely began just as many have begun in modern times.

What may we say of the 5th, 6th and 7th verses of this letter? In them Jude referred to certain severe judgments that God had inflicted as evidence that he would not forget those “ungodly men” of whom he had been writing.

What of the 8th verse, and onward to the end of the 16th? In these we have a further description of those “ungodly men,” of whom Jude was writing. In the 8th verse he brought three specifications against them. He said they were “dreamers,” who defiled the flesh, despised dominion, or authority, and spoke evil of dignities. These specifications, especially the second and third of them, show

that they were on the order of anarchists. Many of that class are connected with churches. Even the Church of Christ is not free from religious anarchists.

What is the force of the 9th verse? The example of Michael in his contention with his Satanic majesty, the devil, indicates that when officials in civil governments are rebuked the Lord should do it, even if those officials are under the control of the devil. Therefore, the worst that even Christians should say to them is, "The Lord rebuke thee." Moreover, in Ezekiel 36:23, and in many other scriptures, we learn that God desires to be recognized even among heathen nations, and by heathen governments, but he proposes to be known by them through a manifestation of his power.

Why did the devil contend with Michael in regard to the body of Moses? We are not informed, and should not speculate. God had his own reason for giving the body of Moses a secret burial, and the devil had his reason for being present on the occasion of its burial. If God's purpose was to prevent the Israelites from building a monument to the honor of Moses, then the devil's purpose was to be contrary. But the end of divine testimony should be the end of conclusions in regard to divine revelation.

What of the 10th verse? In it the apostle charges ignorance, presumption and corruption. Then in the 11th verse he declares that those against whom he wrote imitated Cain, Balaam, and Core, or Korah. Cain presumed to differ from God's directions in making an offering to him, hated his brother because he followed the divine directions in regard to worship, slew his brother, and then lied about it. As a result he received a punishment which he said was greater than he could bear. See Genesis, 4th chapter. Balaam, in order to secure wages of unrighteousness, presumed to approach God a second time in regard to the messengers who came to hire him, and after God had caused him to bless Israel he gave evil counsel to Balak against the people of Israel. See Numbers 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th and 31st chapters, also Revelation 2:14. Core, or Korah, with certain others, presumed that they were equal in authority and holiness with Moses and Aaron, and they were overthrown. See Numbers 16th chapter.

What of the "feasts of charity" mentioned in the 12th verse? The New Testament churches had such feasts, even as they now have a "basket dinner" in a grove, or at some other place, when an audience is expected to remain for a dis

course in the afternoon of a Lord's day, or any other day when disciples may so arrange. On such occasions all are, invited, and, in some instances, the lack of manners on the part of some, is objectionable, and tends to cause disciples to make such occasions very seldom.

Is the prophecy of Enoch elsewhere recorded in the Sacred Text? No. And here is evidence of Jude's inspiration, even as Paul's quotation from Christ in Acts 20:35 indicates that he was inspired. In both of these instances a quotation was made which had not been recorded, as far as we may judge by the Scriptures as they are given to us.

What may we say of the last of the 16th verse? It is an index to much that now exists in the religious world. Preachers have, quite generally, followed the example of showmen and politicians in making use of their pictures to attract attention. By so doing they indicate that they wish the people, before whom they advertise, to "have men's persons in admiration because of advantage." They seem, even, to have their own persons "in admiration." All this is condemnable and is a sure index to a condition of mind which suggests the picture business of the apostate church. Roman Catholics have set an example in favor of pictures of men and women to advance religion, and all Protestants who have become possessed of Rome's spirit, even in a small degree, are, generally, disposed to resort to pictures of men and women in behalf of religion. The abomination of that picture business we find recorded in the 8th chapter of Ezekiel. Those who wish to know God's estimate of such things, and of those who adopt them, should read that chapter.

What of the 17th, 18th and 19th verses? The 17th and 18th set forth an exhortation based on that which certain others had said against those who would "walk after their own ungodly lusts," and in the 19th verse Jude declares that those of whom he had written were of that character. He says, "These are they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

What of the 20th verse, and onward to the end of the 23rd? In these verses, even as in the first three of this letter, also in the 17th and 18th, we may learn that Jude was kind and gentle toward his brethren, and was severe only against the "ungodly men" with reference to whom he wrote. In the 22nd and 23rd verses he indicated that Christians should make "a difference" in their efforts to save mankind. To some we should show "compassion," while to others we

should show severity, even indicating that we hate their vile conduct. Our severity should be such as we would show if we would be required to engage in “pulling them out of the fire. “

What should we say of the benediction recorded in the 24th and 25th verses? We should simply refer to it, and repeat it, and then let it remain without comment throughout all ages.

“NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO KEEP YOU FROM FALLING, AND TO PRESENT YOU FAULTLESS BEFORE THE PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY WITH EXCEEDING JOY: TO THE ONLY WISE GOD OUR SAVIOR, BE GLORY, AND MAJESTY, DOMINION, AND POWER, BOTH NOW AND FOREVER. AMEN.”

REVELATION

A VIEW OF OUTLINES ACCORDING TO SUBJECTS

What are the subjects “signified” in the book that we now begin to consider?” The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which shortly must come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.” We should remember while considering this book that the Greek word translated “signified” means, “to indicate by a sign, to signal, to indicate or to intimate.”

How many “sevens” do we find mentioned in this book, and what is “signified” by them? First, we find mention made of “the seven churches” which were, “in Asia,” and of “the seven spirits which are before his throne,” or the throne of God. See chapter 1:4. Next we are informed of “seven golden candlesticks” and “seven stars.” See chapter 1:12,16,20. These “seven stars,” as angels, or messengers, of the “seven churches” which are represented by the “seven golden candlesticks” and the “seven churches,” as such, are separately mentioned in the 3rd and 4th chapters. The “seven spirits,” with the “seven stars,” are mentioned also in chapter 3:1. Then, we next find mention made of “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.” See chapter 4:5. Besides, we find, in chapter 5:1, mention made of a certain book “sealed with seven seals,” and in the 6th verse of that chapter a record is given of “seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” In chapter 8:2—We read of “seven angels” to whom were given “seven trumpets,” and in chapter 10:3,4 we read of “seven thunders.” In chapter 11:13 we are informed of “seven thousand” men slain in an earthquake, and in chapter 12:3 we read of a dragon “having seven heads,” while in chapter 13:1 we read of a “beast “ ” having seven heads. “ In chapter 15:6, 7 we read of “seven angels,” “seven plagues,” and “seven golden vials full of the wrath of God.” Finally, in chapter 17:3, we read again of another “beast” “having seven

heads,” And in the, 9th verse of that chapter we learn that “the seven heads” of that beast “are seven mountains.” These sevens, in all, are twenty, if this counting is correct, and all are full of meaning in the vision which John saw.

How many twelves do we find mentioned in this book? We first find mention made twice of a multiple of twelve in chapter 4:4, for the “four and twenty seats” and the “four and twenty elders” make two times twelve in each instance. Then in chapter 7:4-8 mention is made of twelve tribes, and twelve times twelve, or a hundred and forty-four, while in chapter 11:2 we find another multiple of twelve in the “forty and two months,” or twelve hundred and sixty years. In chapter 12:1 we read of “a crown of twelve stars,” and in the 6th verse of that chapter we read of another multiple of twelve in the “thousand two hundred and three-score days” there mentioned. Finally, in chapter 21 :12, we read of “twelve gates,” and “twelve angels,” and “twelve tribes,” while in the 14th verse of that chapter we read of “twelve foundations,” and “twelve apostles,” and in the 16th and 17th verses we read of “twelve thousand furlongs,” and of twelve times twelve. Finally, in chapter 22:2, we read of “twelve manner of fruits” and of every month, which makes twelve months. Here are several hundred twelves, if we count them singly, and in their multiples, and they all have their bearing on the explanation of John's vision.

How many different signs in the form of picture—views, do we find in John's vision? In the first part of his vision he saw a representation, or picture-view, of seven golden candlesticks, in the midst of which he saw Christ walking, and holding in his right hand seven stars. The explanation given of that view shows that it was intended to indicate the seven churches that were in Asia, that Christ recognized them, and held them responsible, and would send a message to each of them. This picture is found in the 1st chapter, and the mentioned explanation is found in that which follows to the end of the 3rd chapter.

Next we learn that John saw as a sign a picture-view of the throne of God in heaven and of God seated on that throne, also of twenty-four seats around that throne, occupied by twenty-four elders. He saw also before the throne a sea of glass, and in the midst of the throne and about it four beasts full of eyes behind and before. Then he heard those elders and beasts praise God as Creator of all things. Next he saw a book in the right hand of Him who sat on the

throne, and saw Christ, who is here declared to be “the Lion of the tribe of Judah,” take the book out of the hand of Him who sat on the throne. Then he heard much praise offered to Christ as Redeemer by the elders and the four beasts, as they are mentioned in the common translation. Finally, he heard angels and all other creatures praise God and Christ. The meaning of this picture-view is that all intelligences in heaven praise God as Creator and Christ as Redeemer, and that, therefore, all other intelligences should praise God and Christ in the same manner, or because of their creating and redeeming power.

John next saw a series of six picture-views. The first of them consisted of a white horse and his rider, representing truth and its conquests. The second view was a red horse and his rider, representing war and its results. The third view which John saw was that of a black horse and his rider, representing justice among mankind. The fourth view was that of a pale horse and his rider, representing death from various causes among mankind. The fifth view was that of the souls of martyrs under the altar in heaven crying for vengeance, and receiving a promise of vengeance in due time. This view represented the forbearance and long-suffering of God with reference to his enemies before inflicting vengeance on them. The sixth view was that of an earthquake, of blackness of the sun, redness of the moon, falling of the stars of heaven, departing of the heavens, moving of the islands and the mountains. and consternation in the disobedient of mankind. This view was intended to represent the terribleness of the divine wrath when it will be yet shown to mankind. But this last view does not mean the end of the world.

That which has been thus far stated concerning picture-views is intended to indicate the style of the Apostle John throughout this book, which may be spoken of as a divine picture gallery. In each picture we find an important event, and sometimes several events, set forth. This is the style of the Old Testament prophets, in declaring many of the visions which God gave to them. Whether we take Isaiah's record of the vineyard of which he wrote in the 5th chapter of his prophecies, or Ezekiel's vision of dry bones as found in the 37th chapter of his prophecies, or any other record in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, the same is true. And familiarity with them is needed in order to understand the Apostle John's record of his visions.

The chief reason that the last book of the, Bible is regarded

as mysterious is because not many of those who try to understand it make, even, a thousandth part of the preparation that they should make for studying it. The writer of these "Questions, Answers, and Remarks," spent near or about twenty years studying the former part of the Sacred Text before he ventured into John's vision with the purpose of fathoming all that it declares. But a majority of those who venture into that book have not studied the New Testament with care, not to speak of the Old Testament. Or, they have tried to understand the Old Testament prophecies before they had studied with care the history and doctrine recorded in the Old Testament. Their conduct in so doing has been like that of a student of mathematics who would try to understand the third part of arithmetic without having studied the first and second parts of it.

The wisest and best man in heathenism was Socrates, and he is accredited with this saying: "Whoever would enter the temple of philosophy must banish prejudice, passion, and sloth." That saying is equally true of all who would understand the Bible, and especially the prophetic -writings of both the Old Testament and the New. Prejudice, or prejudgment, will bias the mind so as to prevent it from grasping aright that which is considered by it. "Passion" will cause haste, and haste is always in opposition to successful study in any domain of learning. Last, but not least, "sloth" must be banished by every student who would be successful, especially the one who would understand the Bible. But all of these evils afflict many, who are not aware of them, and, therefore do not seek deliverance from them. As a result the clearest instructions, and most valuable aids, are not of advantage to them. With one accord they say, "I can't see it," and often cast reflections on their instructors.

Next we find a picture of four angels standing on "the four corners of the earth." The expression. "four corners, of the earth" is accommodative speech. We speak of "the four quarters of the globe." In this picture we find "signified," or indicated, God's care for his people, and that he will save them from the plagues of the last days.

In the picture of the sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand from among the Jews we find an indication that God will have a definite number of them from a special class. The picture which is next offered for us to view indicates, or signifies, that the number of the saved from among the Gentiles will be great. though, in view of Mat-

thew 7:13,14, it will be made up of “few” compared with those who will be lost. This picture indicates, likewise, that the chief employment of the redeemed in heaven will be to praise God and Christ, and that the redeemed will be always free from everything which causes unhappiness in this world.

The picture of all that Christ “signified” to the Apostle John in regard to the opening of the seventh seal is offered to us in the 8th and 9th chapters. We learn by plain statements in the last two verses. of the 9th chapter that all the damages, and sufferings, and deaths, mentioned in the 8th and 9th chapters of this book, will be inflicted on the heathen nations before the end of the Gospel Age.

The Savior next offered to John's view the picture of a “mighty angel” who had “a little book” in 'his hand which was given to John to eat. The meaning of this picture to John was that he should “prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues, and kings.” This he is still doing by his vision which he wrote.

That which John next saw refers to the Jewish city called Jerusalem, the wickedness of the Jews, God's judgment upon them and their city at some future time, and their conversion. This is followed by a picture of that which indicates that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of God and Christ. But this will be accomplished by the exercise of God's “great power,” and not by the Gospel, for the nations will then be “angry.”

A picture or sign of the glory of the Jewish church, of the birth of Christ, and of the persecution of Christ, and of his deliverance from his persecutors, was next offered to John. Then we read of a picture or sign of war in heaven, of the fact that Satan was in heaven and was cast out of heaven and down to the earth, and of Satan as a persecutor of the Church here on earth.

John saw next in his vision a picture or image of a beast which signified the government which would persecute the Church, then of another beast which would also be a persecuting power. John saw that this second beast would be somewhat like a lamb, yet would speak like a dragon, and thus would be a persecuting power. These two beasts signified the two greatest persecuting powers that have ever afflicted the Church, namely, pagan Rome and papal Rome.

Next we are informed that John saw and heard that which signified the blessedness of the select company that has been saved, and will be saved of the Jews. Paul's history

indicates that he will be of that company. John next saw and heard an indication of the preaching of the Gospel, the fall of mystic Babylon, and of the final judgment of those who accept the doctrine of that Babylon, which is, undoubtedly, the Roman Catholic church. To this were added the words of a voice which declared the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord. A picture, or sign, of the reaping of the harvest of the earth was next set before the Apostle John, by which the final judgment is indicated.

“Another sign,” one that was “great and marvelous,” was seen by the Apostle John. It consisted of “seven angels having the seven last plagues.” This was followed by a vision of something like “a sea of glass mingled with fire,” and of those who will be victorious over the beast.

The pouring out of the vials of God's wrath is set forth in another picture or sign, also the results of that wrath. This is followed by a picture of the Roman Catholic church in the picture of a lewd woman as a sign. Closely connected with that sign is the explanation which the revealing angel made to John of that sign. Next we find mention of a revelation “signified” by an account of “another angel” “having great power,” and of that which he said about mystic Babylon, and her overthrow.

Another revelation is signified by “an angel” which John saw “come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, “ also by that which was done by, that angel as John saw him in his vision. John next had a vision of the Millennial Age and of the final judgment. This is followed by a vision of the new heavens and the new earth, and of the new Jerusalem. The vision is ended with plain statements concerning the obedience necessary to salvation, the danger of adding to the words of this vision, and of taking from them, with the final recorded prayer of the Apostle John in regard to the grace of God.

ANALYSIS OF THIS BOOK

In the 1st chapter the Apostle John recorded a vision of Christ and the seven congregations in Asia. This is continued in the 2nd and 3rd chapters.

In the 4th chapter John informs us that he was given a vision of God, and of the redeemed ones praising him as Creator.

In the 5th chapter John recorded a vision he had of God and Christ, also of a book that had seven seals. In connection with this John had a vision of the redeemed ones

praising Christ as Redeemer, and then a vision of all the redeemed ones with many angels praising both God and Christ.

In the 6th chapter John recorded what he saw and heard of the opening of six of the seven seals of the book that Christ received from God, indicating the mission of truth, and of war, also the mission of justice and of death from many causes, finally, a vision of a cry for justice by martyrs, and a vision of the beginning of God's shaking of both earth and heaven, as foretold in Hebrews 12:26, 27.

In the 7th chapter is a record of God's care for a special class of Jewish servants, also of the multitudes of the redeemed praising God and Christ, and of the blessedness of all the redeemed both of Jews and Gentiles.

In the 8th and 9th chapters of this book we find a record of John's vision of God's dealings with the heathen when the time will have come that he will send special judgments on them. That the heathen are referred to in these chapters is evident from the declarations in the last two verses of the 9th chapter. Heathenism is the oldest human rebellion against God now in existence on earth and God will deal with it first in his special judgments. Those judgments are largely of the kind he inflicted on Egypt when he was convincing them that they should let Israel go and serve him.

In the 10th chapter is recorded a vision of a mighty angel that had a little book, also of seven thunders that John heard, but was commanded not to write.

Then in the 11th chapter is a record of God's final judgment on the Jews when they will come to their final effort in rebelling against him, also of the effect of that judgment in converting them. This is followed by a record of the fact that the kingdoms of this world will then become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Judaism is the second great rebellion against God that now exists on earth, and it will be second in God's special judgments in the last days.

In the 12th chapter we find a record of John's vision of the first existence of Christ on earth in the body of an infant, also the first mention of the devil as an accuser of his brethren in heaven, and the most definite mention of war in heaven.

In the 13th chapter we find a record of John's vision of the origin of pagan Rome. as a beast of power, and of the fact that Rome received seat, power, and authority from the

devil. In the same chapter we read of the rise of the papal power as a beast with two horns like a lamb. Then in the next chapter and onward to the end of the 19th the rise, power, and overthrow, of papal Rome is the chief subject of John's vision.

In the 20th chapter we find John's vision of the first resurrection and of the last resurrection, also of the Millennial Age between them, and of the last battle with Satan, also of his overthrow with his final hosts among men, or as made up of men.

In the 21st and 22nd chapters we find John's vision of the New Jerusalem, and of those that will dwell therein forever.

Whoever fails to consider this analysis, especially that part of it in which the three great rebellions against God are mentioned, cannot understand the most difficult parts of the Revelation which God made through Christ by his angel to the Apostle John. The reader of the letter to the Romans cannot understand it without considering the threefold bearing of that letter, namely, to Christians chiefly, then concerning unbelieving Gentiles, also to unbelieving Jews. Neither can the reader of John's vision on the Isle of Patmos understand the 8th chapter and onward to the end of the 19th without considering the three greatest rebellions which now exist on earth,—heathenism, Judaism, and Catholicism.

All efforts to deny that miracles will accompany the end of the Gospel Age are as erroneous as would be efforts to explain away the miracles recorded concerning the beginning of the Gospel Age. The same is true of all efforts to show that Christ will be universally, or even generally, accepted by mankind through the effect of carnal wars on the one hand or carnal advocacy of the Gospel on the other, or a combination of both of these forces. With few exceptions mankind always have gone astray in proportion as they have been favored with peace and prosperity, and we should not expect anything better from them in the time to come. The future behavior of mankind generally is found in their history during the past.

As a result of not making, or considering, the analysis just mentioned, and other important discriminations, the writers on the prophecies of both the Old Testament and the New have been guilty of many and serious errors. They seem to have read so much uninspired history that they have confused themselves in regard to the plainness of prophecy. Not one of them seems to have remembered 1st Peter

4:11, except incidentally, or when his speculative purpose could be served by so doing. The eloquence of several of those writers shows that they were of a rhetorical, rather than of a logical, cast of brain. Therefore they seem to have been often, if not constantly, inclined to "let imagination stretch her wings." As a result we may find much said in their writings about the "political heavens," also, about "the lost ten tribes," and that the woman mentioned in Revelation 12th chapter was "the Romish church," and the "man-child the pope of Rome." To these errors may be added the supposition that the prophecy in Genesis 49:10 ended with Zedekiah the last king of Judah before the captivity of the Jews among the Babylonians, also the supposition that the record of the results of opening the sixth seal of the seven-sealed book referred to the fall of pagan Rome in the days of Constantine, while others suppose that those results referred to the fall of the Church when papal Rome was established. Next should be mentioned the error of supposing that the 11th chapter of Revelation refers to pagan and papal Rome in their progress and fall, also the supposition that the man-child mentioned in the 12th chapter of that book will be some kind of a strong man or strong government that will be brought forth by some kind of a political upheaval. And the finishing touch seems to be in the supposition that the Atlantic States of the United States of America were that woman that brought forth, or will bring forth, that man-child. Next should be mentioned the supposition that pagan Rome, as mentioned in Revelation 13th chapter, was the great red dragon mentioned in the 12th chapter of that book, also the supposition that in the 20th chapter of the last book in the Bible three resurrections are mentioned, two mental, and one literal, also that the thousand years mentioned in that book will be only some sort of an indefinite period. How incautious those writers were when they wrote is illustrated by the fact that one of them specially contended that not all of the historic books of the Old Testament need to be read before entering upon the study of the prophetic books of that Testament. This seems to be the climax of incautious writing, for how can any prophetic reference to the return of the Jews from Babylon be understood by those that have not first read the books of Ezra and Nehemiah?

All of the errors just mentioned are but instances, or illustrations, of many others. They are all widely separated from truth, and in certain particulars are the reverse of truth. That is to say, they are not only contrary, but are

contradictory, to the truth, and are here referred to as a warning that the reader should ever consider, “If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God.” If outside history agrees with the “oracles of God” then all right; but if not then so much the worse for that history.

CHAPTER I

What do we find in this chapter? We first find an introductory, in which is a general statement concerning the revelation offered in this entire book, also that the Apostle John was the one who was commanded to write this book, and that those are “blessed” who hear and read, and “keep those things which are written” in this book. We find next that John addressed “the seven churches in Asia” with reference to God, and to “the seven spirits which are before his throne,” also with reference to “Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness.” We then find mention made of that which Christ had done for the redeemed; and of his second coming, and this is followed by a record of a speech which is attributed to the “Lord” who is also called “the Almighty.” Next we find a record of that which John wrote concerning himself, the place where he was, his condition in regard to the Spirit of God, what he heard, and what he saw, also what effect that which he saw and heard had on him. The chapter is ended with a record of the explanation of that which John thus far had seen.

What may we say of the first three verses of this chapter? In the 1st verse we are informed that the book of which it is the beginning is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him.” Then we are informed that this revelation was intended to show unto Christians “things which must shortly come to pass.” Finally, we are informed that God “sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.” In the 2nd verse we are informed that John bore “record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.” In the 3rd verse we learn that John was authorized to pronounce those “blessed” who read, and hear, “the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.” The 3rd verse ends with the declaration that “the time is at hand,” which must mean that the time had come for the beginning of the fulfillment of the series of the prophecies which John was about to begin to record. In order to understand that which he recorded we must remember that the Greek word translated by the word “sig-

nified” in the 1st verse means “to indicate by a sign, to signal.” This word gives the key to unlock the mysteries of this book.

What of the 4th verse? In it we learn that John, first of all, addressed “the seven churches” that were “in Asia” at that time, and pronounced “grace * * and peace” upon them from God, and from “the seven spirits which are before his throne.” These “seven spirits” are in chapter 5:6 declared to be the “seven horns and seven eyes” which God “sent forth into all the earth.” In Zechariah 1:21 “horns” are declared to be a destructive power. The word “eyes” is also mentioned in Zechariah 3:9, so as to indicate vision. The “seven spirits of God” here mentioned are, therefore, those spirits which God has used, and will use, to go into all the earth and accomplish the ends that he has in view. In Genesis 19:1-25 we read of two of those spirits and of that which they did in regard to the city of Sodom.

What may we say of the 5th verse and onward to the end of the 8th? In them John wrote of Christ, of that which he is, and has done for the redeemed, also of his second coming, of those who shall see him, of praise that is due to him, and of the fact that when he will come again “all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. “In what sense are Christians made “kings and priests unto God”? In 2 Peter 2:5 we are informed that the priesthood of Christians is in the fact that they are “to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Then in I Corinthians 6:2 we are informed that “the saints shall judge the world.” Then in Luke 11:31, 32 we are informed that such judging will be accomplished by the obedience which “the saints” will have rendered to God when the judgment day shall come. In this sense “the saints” are made kings, because a king is always a judge. Besides, “the saints” are “children of God” and “heirs” of God. See Galatians 3:26-29. By reason of such relationship all Christians are members of the royal or kingly family of which Christ is the eldest son, and he calls them “brethren.” See Hebrews 2:11,12.

What may we learn by considering the 10th verse of this chapter? In the first part of it John declares that he was “in the Spirit on the Lord's day.” The force of the expression, “in the Spirit,” may be understood, in some measure, by considering Acts 10:10, where we learn that the Apostle Peter was “in a trance,” and that while in a trance

he saw a vision of God so that he could see that which would otherwise be invisible, or hear that which he would not otherwise be able to hear. The latter part of the verse under consideration informs us that while “in the Spirit,” John “heard behind” him “a great voice, as of a trumpet.” Then in the 11th verse we are informed of that which John heard that “great voice” say. In the 12th verse, and onward to the end of the 16th, John declares or was so taken possession of by the Spirit that he saw a vision of seven golden candlesticks, also of a glorious person in the midst of them, with seven stars in his right hand. In the 17th verse he states the effect that seeing the person he beheld in his vision had on him, and this is followed by a statement of what that person did to him, and said to him. As we find in the 20th verse an explanation of the vision of the candlesticks, and of the stars, we need not to spend time considering them, except to mention the appropriateness of the “sign” in the vision. As the Church of God is to uphold the truth (1 Timothy 3:14,15), which is spiritual light, a golden candlestick is an appropriate symbol of such a Church. Then as the messengers of the churches were to receive of the spiritual light which the Son of God, who is also called “Sun of Righteousness” (Malachi 4:2), would give, therefore those messengers were appropriately “signified” by stars, which are light-bearers. But we should remember that they are not spoken of as “stars of heaven,” but are so defined as to indicate that they were men.

What should we say to those who deny that “the Lord's day,” mentioned in the 10th verse of this chapter, is the first day of the week?

1. We should say to them, that one day of the seven, which make up the week, was designated “the Lord , is day” by the Apostle John.

2. The first day of the week was the day that the Lord, of the Gospel Age, arose from the dead. (See Matthew 28:1-6.)

3. On the first day of the week the Lord, of the Gospel Age, sent the Holy Spirit upon his Apostles. See Leviticus 23:15,16. The word “Pentecost” means fiftieth, and was applied to the first day of the feast which began on the fiftieth day after the offering of the first ripe sheaf of the harvest among the Jews. Seven full weeks after a Sabbath made forty-nine, and the next day was the first day.

4. On the first day of the week the Lord's people met, early in the Gospel. Age, to commemorate their Lord's death,

burial, and resurrection, and they did this on that day with divine approval. See Acts 20:7.

5. All those who deny that the first day of the week is “the Lord's day,” as mentioned in the verse now under consideration, should be requested, urged, and required, to name the day that more certainly deserves to be designated the Lord's day than the first day of the week. If they fail to do so they should be regarded as quibblers, and if they persist in their denial that the first day of the week is “the Lord's day,” in a special, and peculiar, and pre-eminent, sense, and especially if they try to disturb the minds of the people, either in the church, or out of it by the mentioned denial, they should be regarded as heretics and treated accordingly. See Titus 3:10, 11.

Erring brethren who are plain and humble should be borne with to the utmost. But the self-conceit manifested by technical reasoners, who are neither more nor less than quibblers, is a mark of heresy wherever it exists, and deserves to be dealt with as heresy.

What may we say of the glory of Christ's appearance, as John saw him in his vision, and as recorded in this chapter? That appearance, 'as described by the Apostle John, should fill all who read it with reverence and humility, and even with awe and consternation. The fact that John beheld himself, in his vision, fall “at his feet as dead,” indicates the estimate in which we should hold the glorified Redeemer. John could not stand before him, and we should fear and tremble at the thought of appearing before him. When he appeared to Saul of Tarsus in “a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun.” (Acts 26:13), Saul, and those with him, fell to the earth. In view of all this certainly all mankind who read these records of him should be filled with such reverence for him that they should ever feel like falling prostrate before him.

But, instead of being filled with such reverence that they will tremble at his word, multitudes, even of those who profess to be his followers, trifle with his words, and try to evade their force by flippant criticisms. They act, in many instances, as if they are as destitute of reverence as a swine is supposed to be, and many of them will never change till they will awake in hades on the wrong side of the great gulf. The secret of such irreverence is found in that hateful something known as indifference, for which that other hateful something known as sectism is largely responsible. By reason of indifference, or carelessness, concerning their spiritual welfare, mankind fail to read the

Bible as they should, and fail to consider seriously that which they do read, or which others thrust upon them. They illustrate Isaiah 1:3, which declares, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider." Sectism trains those under its influence to become irreverent toward certain scriptures, and this, in course of time, means irreverence toward all scripture. Romanists seem to have more reverence for the Bible than the Protestant sects have. The Protestant reformers rejected the assumed authority of the Romish church but (lid not fully accept the authority of Christ.

CHAPTER II

Of what are Bible readers informed in this chapter? We are informed first of the letter which the Apostle John was instructed to write to the church at Ephesus. Next we find a record of John's letter to the church in Smyrna. This is followed by a record of his letter to the church in Pergamos. Finally, we have a record offered to us of John's letter to the church that was then in Thyatira.

Who was "the angel of the church" that John addressed in the first verse of this chapter? The Greek word here translated "angel" means also "one sent; messenger." In view of this, and the fact that John was commanded to write in a book that which he saw and "send it unto the churches which are in Asia" (chapter 1:11), we must conclude that "the angel" here mentioned was a member of the church. He may have been one of the elders, but as the Greek word used to designate him means one who is sent, and thus a messenger, he was that one of the members who was used by the church as a messenger, and, therefore, was the one through whom the church sent and received messages. The same was true in regard to each of the other churches that John addressed.

What may we learn by considering the letter which John addressed to the church at Ephesus? We may learn that Christ does not intend to make any compromise with any of his churches. Though the church at Ephesus had done right in many particulars, yet it had left its "first love," and, in so doing, it had sinned so grievously that Christ threatened to reject it if it did not repent. We learn also that a church does not forfeit character by doing wrong, if that wrong is not a crime like blasphemy, but that character is forfeited, or broken down, by persisting in wrong after it has been committed. Christ did not threaten to

reject the church, as is implied by the threat to remove its “candlestick out of its place,” without giving that church an opportunity to repent. In Matthew 18:15-17 we learn that an individual trespasser should have three opportunities to repent before he should be rejected. This shows the graciousness of God toward us, and indicates the graciousness which we should show toward each other. But the rejection threatened against the church at Ephesus, if it would not repent, indicates also the exclusion which should now be inflicted upon those who persist in doing wrong. In view of this all disciples of Christ may soon learn how to treat all innovators, and all other errorists. If they show themselves unwilling to be convinced, or unwilling to turn from their errors when convinced, they should be charged with heresy and rejected according to Titus 3:10, 11.

What was the doctrine of the Nicolaitans as here mentioned, also in the 15th verse of this chapter? The Sacred Text does not inform us, and church historians do not agree on the subject. Therefore, we should not try to decide what that doctrine was.

What may we learn by considering the letter here addressed to the church that was in the city of Smyrna? We may learn that the church in that city was not guilty of any error by reason of which it was threatened with rejection, but that it was exhorted not to fear that which it should be required to suffer. We learn also that the promise of “a crown of life” is not offered on the basis of success, but it is offered to those who will be “faithful unto death.” This is in harmony with the parable of the talents. See Matthew 25:14-30. The Lord does not require that his people shall be successful, in the estimation of the world, but that they shall be “faithful.” “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” This is the divine doctrine, and not a word is said about success. Yet the best, and most permanent success in Gospel worship and work, is the result of faithfulness on the part of all Christians.

What is the force of the expression “ten days” in the 10th verse? In prophetic language a year is sometimes represented by a day. See Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:1-6. In view of this the “ten days” here mentioned may have meant ten years, or the expression, “ten days,” may have been used to represent an indefinite period.

What may we say of the letter which John addressed to the church in Pergamos? In it we learn that Christ commended

that church for all its faithfulness, but reproved it wherein it had done wrong. Here is another evidence that he does not intend to compromise with mankind. Acceptance with Christ is not the result of balancing accounts, nor striking a balance sheet. The good that mankind do avail not be accepted by Christ as an offset to their evils. But all evils must be repented of, in order for them to be forgiven, and forgiveness is the only plan that God has arranged by which sinners can escape the divinely ordained penalty threatened against them.

What was the doctrine of Balaam? It is here declared to be that he “taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.” In Numbers 31:16 we learn that he gave “counsel” by reason of which certain women betrayed certain of “the children of Israel.” Josephus states that when Balaam found that he could not curse Israel he informed Balak, King of Moab, how, by means of his most beautiful young women, he could betray young men of Israel, and thereby bring them under God's curse. That which Josephus states, on this subject, is in perfect harmony with all that is found in the Sacred Text concerning it. Moreover, the doctrine of Balaam, in principle, is that which has been most successful against the Church in all ages. Satan has not been able to destroy the Church by persecution, but when he has seduced the Church to do wrong, then he has led it to destroy itself.

What of the letter to the church in Thyatira? Here we find further evidence that Christ does not propose to compromise with mankind. In other words, he does not propose to have them to balance evil with good. He approved the good in the church in Thyatira, and condemned it, evil. The evil that he condemned he mentioned, and offered his threatenings with reference to it. A bad woman who called herself a “prophetess” seems to have been the chief sinner in the church at Thyatira. This should have proved a sufficient warning to have prevented all other uninspired women, who have tried to be leaders of religious thought, from venturing to thrust themselves before the public as preachers or prophetesses. Then the threatenings recorded in the 22nd and 23rd verses ought to have proved sufficient to have prevented such women from securing followers.

What of those that say the Jezebel here mentioned did not mean a real woman, but a character? We should inform them that the name “Jezebel” means “chaste,” and such

a name would not have been used to designate a bad character.

What may we say of the 26th, 27th and 28th verses? In them the apostle sets forth the dignity and grandeur of the position which shall be occupied by the redeemed ones when the end of the Gospel Age will come. In Jeremiah 1:10 we may learn how God anciently gave a man power over “the nations.” God put his words in that man's mouth, and when those words were spoken, and fulfilled, then nations were established or overthrown, according as those words declared. This indicates all that is here declared, except as Christians, by their obedience, will condemn all who refused to obey when opportunity was given to them. See Luke 11:31,32.

What may we say of the declaration, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,” as recorded at the end of each of the letters addressed to the seven churches in Asia? That declaration shows that the Lord desires all classes, of all sizes, and ages, to hear that which he has offered to the churches. It shows, likewise, that the Spirit speaks to the churches by words, even written words. Nor is there any evidence in the Sacred Text that the Holy Spirit was intended, after the 1st Century of the Gospel Age would be ended, to speak to the Church in regard to its duty otherwise than by his written words. In I Corinthians 13:8 we find an indication that all special gifts should cease, and this implies that when they should cease God's people would be wholly under the direction of the written word for guidance in duty.

What of the promises to him that “overcometh,” as far as those promises are mentioned in, or near, the close of each of the letters addressed to the seven churches in Asia? Those promises are high, grand, and dignified. Each of them, separately considered, should be sufficient to inspire obedience in all who read them. All of them taken together should be overwhelming.

CHAPTER III

Of what do we read in this chapter? We here read of John's letter to the church in Sardis, and then of his letter to the church in Philadelphia, and finally, of his letter to the church in Laodicea.

What may we learn by considering the first of the letters recorded in this chapter? We may here learn that the church in Sardis had a name to live, but was dead; likewise, that there were a few persons “even in Sardis” that had

“not defiled their garments,” and to them was given an assurance of salvation. This indicates that mankind will not be saved as churches, but as individuals. Are not many churches now in the same condition that the church in Sardis was in? Yes, even among professed churches of Christ, some have a name to live, but are dead. Even churches in some instances that keep up a form of worship, and meet regularly, have so little spiritual-mindedness that their efforts to worship God are a dead formality. The prayers of those who pray show that those who offer them are not in the habit of addressing their heavenly Father in prayer, and the same is true of those who give thanks. They have read so little of the Bible, and have meditated so little on that which they have read, that their reverence is not stirred, and all their singing, as well as their praying and thanksgiving, may be declared to be destitute of true worship, for it is not in spirit, but simply with the voice. All such have a name to live, but are dead. To them the exhortation found in the 2nd verse of this chapter is applicable, and they should remember the warning set forth in the 3rd verse. The Lord Jesus Christ threatens such a church, and this implies that he threatens the cold-hearted professors of which such a church is chiefly, if not wholly, composed.

What erroneous doctrine is exposed by the 5th verse? The doctrine, “Once in grace always in grace,” is here exposed. That doctrine implies that if names are once written in the book of life they will forever remain there, and this means that they could not be blotted out. But if that doctrine could be true, then the Savior would not have intimated that the names of Christians might be blotted out. In 1 Corinthians 9:27 we find more on the same subject. Paul could have been lost even after having preached the Gospel faithfully, though he was fore-ordained and predestinated to be an apostle. Ephesians 1:4,5.

What of the letter to the church in Philadelphia? We may learn that the church in that city had “a little strength,” and was commended for doing right in certain directions, but it is not as highly commended as the church in Smyrna, which was afflicted with “poverty,” yet was “rich.” In view of this the church in Philadelphia should not be spoken of as “the perfect church.” Christ commands his people to be “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” See Ephesians 6:10. Therefore, a church that had only “a little strength” was not “the perfect church,” and should not be thus spoken of by any one.

What is the bearing of the expression, “an open door,” as recorded in the 8th verse? We may learn by reading I Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12, that “an open door” to a preacher, or a church, means an opportunity to make known the truth.

What may we learn by considering the letter to the church at Laodicea? We may learn that the church at that place endeavored to please the Lord by living between the extreme of right, in opposition to wrong, on the one hand, and the extreme of wrong in opposition to right, on the other. That is to say, it tried to maintain itself in the so-called “happy medium,” and, as a result, was “lukewarm,” and disgusted the Savior. Here is a warning which should cause the professors of Christ to tremble if they try to maintain a so-called “happy medium,” or try to get to heaven without living the life of wholehearted Christians. Instead of pleasing Him they disgust him, for he said to the church at Laodicea, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

What was the secret of the church at Laodicea becoming “lukewarm”? In the first part of the 17th verse we may learn that it felt it was “rich and increased with goods.” That is to say, favorable earthward circumstances caused that church to feel that it had “need of nothing,” and, as a result, it became “lukewarm,” and disgusting to the Savior.

Are any churches now in that condition? The danger is that most of them are. If they are not in the condition of that church that was at Sardis, and thus, are so cold hearted, that they have a name to live, but are dead, most of them are like the church at Laodicea. But what is the evidence of lukewarmness, either in the church or the individual Christian? This is easily answered. When we consider what the evidences are of lukewarmness between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, friend and friend, then we can understand lukewarmness in religion. When we do not like to be with each other, nor talk to each other, nor hear each other talk, we do not love each other very much. The same is true in religion. In the Bible God talks to us, and in prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and adoration, we talk to God. Now, if we do not like to read the Bible, we do not like for God to talk to us, and here is evidence that we do not love him very much. If we

do not like to pray and give thanks to God, we certainly do not love him very much. In view of all this we can personally decide for ourselves whether, or not, we are lukewarm. When measured by this standard a majority of us will decide that we are “lukewarm,” and must repent if we would avoid disgusting our Savior.

What is the bearing of the 18th verse? In the latter part of the 17th verse the Savior described the “lukewarm” church, that he was addressing through the Apostle John, as “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” In view of his description of that church, in the mentioned verse, Christ here gave hearing”counsel” accordingly, and the hearing of it all is that the church at Laodicea should repent of its lukewarmness, and live the life of wholehearted Christians. Then it would not be “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,” but would be “rich,” and “clothed,” and would be able to “see,” spiritually.

What is indicated in the 19th verse? By reading this verse we may learn that the love which Christ has for his people is not of the sickly, nor of the sentimental, kind, which fawns and flatters, On the contrary, it is of the wholesome kind which rebukes and chastens. But such love is the opposite of that which is, generally, commended among mankind. The common idea is that love is all gentleness, and that all severity is the reverse of love. But this is not the divine doctrine, nor is it the doctrine of common sense. Parents, whose love for their children is such that they will not correct them when they need it, but will let them do as they please, and become disgusting to all others who see and hear them, certainly act the part of parental fools. Sensible parents will “rebuke and chasten” their children because they love them, and will endeavor to train them so that other people can love them. The Savior has here set the example of divine wisdom and love, which all parents should follow in regard to their children, and which all Christians should follow in their relations to each other.

Moreover, those who profess to be Christians should not become offended when they are rebuked for their errors. If they do become offended when rebuked they illustrate Proverbs 15:10, and show that they do not deserve to be regarded as Christians. See John 8:47; 10:27.

What of the 20th verse? In this the Savior represents himself as asking admittance into the confidence, and love of mankind. If they will open their confidence and affection to him he will be their guest. This, in, itself, should be

sufficient to cause all who learn of it to become Christians, and should cause all who have become Christians to be wholehearted in their devotion to God and Christ. The assurance that ignorant and weak creatures, such as we are, may have Christ as our guest, and even as our nearest and dearest one—this assurance should be overwhelming to all who consider it aright. It should cause those who consider it to be filled with gratitude unutterable, that the divine Father did condescend to give to mankind the high and holy privilege of accepting, obeying, and entertaining, their adorable Redeemer.

Having passed, with much satisfaction, through three chapters of this book we are now considering, the reader is requested to discard all preconceived opinions and theories with reference to the remainder of this book. Many volumes have been written concerning it, and, in each instance, by a writer who had not, probably, made one-tenth of the preparation which he should have made before attempting to explain this book. The writer of these “Questions, Answers, and Remarks” never read but one of the mentioned volumes, before writing what is here offered, and that volume was not worth the paper on which it was written, as far as setting forth the teaching of John's vision is concerned. The author of another of those volumes proposed, if we may judge from the name of his book, to write exactly that which the Apostle John was forbidden to write. See chapter 10:4. In view of all this the reader of these “Questions, Answers, and Remarks” is again requested to discard all opinions and theories concerning this book, and now to study it with care. At the same time the reader is warned against the mistake of supposing that John's vision is not understood by anyone, and thus cannot be explained by anyone. Those who are victims of that mistake are in danger of trying to find fault with every explanation given of this book, and of trying to misunderstand everything said concerning it. As previously stated, the Greek word for “signified,” which is used in the 1st verse of the 1st chapter of this book, means “to indicate by a sign, to signal, to indicate, intimate.” This word, if properly used, will serve as the key to unlock all that may seem mysterious in the entire book that we are now considering. It is a book of signs which indicate the facts and truths which God intended to reveal. Besides, we find many plain statements which show what these signs were intended to signify. An instance of this is found in the last verse of the 1st chapter,

CHAPTER IV

What is set forth in this chapter for us to consider? The beginning of John's vision concerning things which were then chiefly in the future, is here set forth. In this part of his vision he beheld "a throne" in heaven, and One who sat on the throne that he beheld. The appearance of that One is then declared, also the number of the seats round about the throne; and mention is made of those who sat on them, and of their appearance. That which proceeded out of the throne is next mentioned, likewise that which John beheld before the throne', including the mention of four living creatures, and of their appearance, and of that which they said. Then we are informed of that which those who sat on the seats round about the throne did and said, as John saw them in his vision.

What is the meaning, bearing, or application, of all that has just been mentioned? In order to understand it all we need to consider that in chapter 1:19 we learn that John was commanded to write the things which he had seen, the things which were at that time in existence, and the things which should be thereafter. In the 2nd and 3rd chapters of this book he wrote, specially, under the first and second headings. But in the beginning of the chapter now before us John declares that he beheld "a door opened in heaven," and that "the first voice" which he heard said to him, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." This was not intended to mean that every thing which John was to be shown, even to the end of his vision, should, in every sense, be numbered with future things. But a line of demarcation was here drawn between that which he had written to the churches in Asia concerning their condition, and the divine will with reference to them, on the one hand, and that which was about to be shown to him concerning the future, on the other hand. The burden of that which he had written was of things then in actual existence, while the burden, or chief part, of that which he was about to be shown was then in the future.

What of the throne which John saw, and what of Him who sat on it? That throne is the throne of God, and the One who sat on it is God, the Father Almighty. See verses 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th.

What may we say of the appearance of Him whom John saw sitting on the throne, as recorded in the 3rd verse? It was the appearance of God as he was pleased to permit

John to see him, and we should be satisfied with John's description of that appearance. In Isaiah 6:1-6 we learn that the Lord permitted an ancient prophet to have a vision of him as he sat on his throne, and that vision will assist us in our study of the chapter now before us.

What of the 4th verse? In chapter 21:12-14 we find the number twelve twice applied to human beings—once to the twelve tribes of fleshly Israel, and once to the twelve Apostles. With this before us we should now consider that “the four and twenty seats” here mentioned were occupied by “four and twenty elders,” who worshiped God, as John saw and heard them in his vision. We should next consider that in the 9th verse of the next chapter they are represented as worshiping Christ as the one who had redeemed them by his blood. This shows that those four and twenty elders once lived on the earth, were sinners and were redeemed by the blood of Christ, or, at least, that they “signify” the redeemed ones. In view of this, chapter 21:12-14 is again suggested, and by historic limitation we are forced to the conclusion that twelve of those elders “signified” the twelve tribes of Israel, and twelve of them “signified” the twelve Apostles. These two twelves “signified” all the redeemed ones from among the Jews. The former twelve “signified” or represented all those who were redeemed from among them in course of the Jewish Age, and the latter twelve represented all those who have been, and will be, redeemed from among the Jews in the Gospel Age. Those representatives, or signs of redeemed ones, from among the Jew, indicated in a vision to John that which all the redeemed Jews will actually do in the ages of eternity when they will all have been gathered together before the throne of God in heaven.

What of the 5th verse? The first part of it suggests Exodus 19:16-20, and Hebrews 12:18-21. When God came down upon Mt. Sinai in Arabia, and for the time had his throne, in one sense, on that mount, “there were thunders and lightnings * * and the voice of a trumpet.” The right consideration of those facts prepares us to understand that God's throne is awful, and the thought of it should fill us with reverence, fear, and trembling. The latter part of the verse before us is explained in chapter 5:6, in which we learn that those seven spirits, here mentioned, are “sent forth into all the earth.” We read of one of those spirits, or of some other that God makes use of, in 1 Kings 22:1,9-23. They are mentioned as “eyes” in Zechariah 3:4:10.

what of the 6th verse ? We read again of the “sea of glass” in chapter 15:2, and there it is declared to have been “mingled with fire.” As we read of it in chapter 15:2 it seems to have been only an appearance and yet an evidence of “ the wrath of God mentioned in the preceding verse of that chapter. This is confirmed by the fact that the word “fire,” as used in this book, is, generally, used in the sense of an element of destruction, or terror or correction. We are informed, likewise, in this verse that John saw “in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four beasts full of eyes before and behind.” When we read in the 8th verse that each of those so-called beasts had “six wings,” we need to turn again to the 6th chapter of Isaiah. There we learn that the living beings which that prophet saw with “six wings” he wrote of as “seraphims.” The word “seraphim” means “burning,” and is the plural form of the word “seraph.” It is applied in the Bible to a certain order of heavenly beings who seem to have been created to be always near the throne of God.

But who are represented by those, so-called “beasts,” which should be called “living creatures” in view of the meaning of the Greek word here translated “beasts”? In the, 8th and 9th verses of the next chapter we learn that those “living creatures,” as John saw them, united with the four and twenty elders in praising Christ because he had been slain, and had redeemed them to God “by his blood.” But we have already learned that the four and twenty elders represented all those who have been and will be redeemed from among the Jews. Besides, in the last verse, we learn that they said, as John heard them, that they had been redeemed “out of every kindred and tongue and people.” Some critics try to think that the last part of that verse is spurious. But as it is in harmony with chapter 7-9-12, we should not consider seriously that which the mentioned critics say on this subject.

What is “signified” by the constancy of the praise which the “living creatures,” here mentioned, render unto God in heaven? It signifies the constancy of the praise which Christians from among all nations render to God on earth. This is signified, or indicated, or, at least, intimated. Certainly our praise of God should be constant.

What may we learn by considering the words, “holy, holy, holy, “ which the four living creatures used, as John heard them, in praising and adoring God? We may learn that those “creatures” were of the same order, if not the iden-

tical creatures, that we read of in Isaiah 6th chapter, for they praised God in those very words.

What do we find in the last verse of this chapter? In this verse we find the expression of praise and adoration which the four and twenty elders used, when John heard them, and that expression we find was to God as Creator. This should not be forgotten. It signifies that all the redeemed at least, who are on the earth should, first of all, praise God as their Creator, and as the Creator of all besides, and beyond, them, both on earth and in heaven.

CHAPTER V

What is set forth in this chapter? The fact is here set forth that John saw God sitting on his throne, and "in his right hand" "a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals." The fact that a certain angel inquired who was "worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof," is also set forth. This is followed by an account of John's emotions when no one "was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon," also an account of that which one of the elders said to him on the subject. In the remainder of the chapter we find an account of Him who was found worthy to open the mentioned book, also of the praise offered to him, and to God by the "four and twenty elders," by "the living creatures," by the "angels," and by every other "creature."

What may we say of the seven-sealed book which John mentioned and described in the first part of this chapter? In the light of the 6th chapter we may say that the mentioned book, which John saw and described, was the book of God's purposes with reference to mankind in regard to mercy and justice. This will become evident when we shall consider the mission of divine truth, and the mission of divine judgments, as "signified" in the next chapter.

Why was Christ the only one who was found worthy to open the seven-sealed book? He is the embodiment of God's mercy, and of God's justice, toward mankind. This is indicated in the prophecy quoted in Matthew 12:20, also in the two-fold character ascribed to him in this book as "the Lamb of God," and "the Lion of the tribe of Judah."

What may we say of the "harps" mentioned in the 8th verse? We may say the same of them that we do of the "golden vials full of odors." They signified, or represented, "the prayers of the saints," and were a part of the picture that John saw. Such is the divine testimony. The "harps"

and the “vials,” as here mentioned, were “the prayers of the saints” in a picture, or “sign.” This book is a part of God's picture-gallery, or sign-book. If the “harps” should be considered separately from the “vials” by some advocate of musical instruments in worship here on earth he should be told that as “the vials,” or the “odors,” in them are “the prayers of the saints,” therefore, the “harps” are the songs of the saints, This is the most that can be reasonably said on this subject. Anything more, or farther, would violate 1 Peter 4:11.

What of the 10th verse? In the light of chapter 1:5, 6 all that has been thus far stated, in these questions, answers, and remarks, concerning the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures, mentioned in this connection, representing the redeemed ones of all nations, is hereby confirmed. John wrote of himself and the obedient ones in “the seven churches in Asia,” and declared in chapter 1:6 that Christ had made him and them “kings and priests unto God,” and here he represents the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures as declaring the same of themselves. This is a plain statement which explains the “sign” to which it refers.

But what of the declaration, “And we shall reign on the earth”? It is like the beatitude which declares, “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5.) If taken in a literal sense it must have reference to the “new earth” (chapter 21:1), and not to this earth which now exists.

What may we say of the record of praise found in the last part of this chapter? The 148th Psalm should be considered in connection with it. God and Christ are worthy to be constantly praised by all other beings, in heaven and on earth.

CHAPTER VI

What is recorded in this chapter for our learning? A record is here given of the opening of six seals of the seven-sealed book, and of that which John saw and heard in connection with the opening of each of them.

What may we learn by considering the record here given of the opening of the first seal of the book that was sealed with seven seals? We may learn that Christ opened the seal, also that one of the four living creatures, mentioned in the 4th and 5th chapters, said unto him, “Come and see.” We may learn, likewise, that when John looked he

beheld “a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer.” What is the meaning, or signification, of this part of John's vision? White is an emblem of purity; and a bow without an arrow is an emblem of peace. In the light of Genesis 9:11-17 a bow is an emblem of good will. Then a crown is an emblem of rulership. In the white horse and his rider we therefore have an emblem of rulership, or power, of peace and good will, also of purity. All this, when taken together, signifies the mission of truth, especially in the Gospel Age. Christ never authorized any life to be taken, nor even a drop of blood to be shed, in advocating, nor in defending, either him or his Gospel. On the contrary, when two of his disciples wished to know if they should call fire down from heaven and consume certain Samaritans, because they would not receive him, he rebuked those disciples. See Luke 9:51-56. And when one of his company, on the night of his betrayal, drew a sword, and began to use it, Christ said, “Put up again thy sword into his place.” See Matthew 26:51,52. All this indicates that the conquest of truth, especially in the Gospel Age, is to be without carnal warfare, and is to be bloodless. Under the influence of truth men may be inspired to fight in carnal warfare for political rights, which will open the way for Gospel truth to fight its spiritual battles with success. Yet the Savior does not authorize blood to be shed in the advancement and defense of his gospel.

What is “signified” by the red horse and his rider whom John saw at the opening of the second seal? The mission of the one whom John saw on the red horse is clearly stated. His business was to take peace from the earth, and to stir mankind to engage in carnal warfare. In I Chronicles 5:22 we read of a carnal war that “was of God.” Then in Isaiah 10:5,6 we learn that God declared he would “send” the king of Babylon against the Jews, while in Isaiah 13:17 we learn that he would “stir up the Medes” against the king of Babylon. Many other instances, of the same kind, might be referred to, but these are sufficient to show that God is sometimes, if not always, the author of carnal wars to accomplish his purposes among the nations of the earth. There are degrees of injustice which God will not suffer nations to inflict upon each other, and especially will he not allow them to add to the punishment which he has placed on the Jews. In Genesis 12:3 God said he would curse him that cursed

Abraham, and this applies to his descendants. See Isaiah 47:1-6; Ezekiel 25:1-17.

What is “signified” by the black horse and his rider, whom John saw at the opening of the third seal? The mission of him whom John saw on the black horse is clearly indicated by the “pair of balances” which he held in his hand. His mission was that of justice, and as justice is measured to those against whom God stirs war we can see why the black horse and his rider should follow the red horse and his rider.

What of the pale horse and his rider, whom John saw at the opening of the fourth seal? The mission of him who sat on the pale horse, as John saw him, is clearly stated. Many are slain in war and slain by violence when there is not any war declared between nations; many are slain by famine; many are slain by disease; and many are slain by beasts of the earth. All of these are under the control of the pale horse and his rider, or, at least, these powers over the life of mankind are all here “signified” by the pale horse and his rider whom John saw when the fourth seal was opened.

What is the Greek word, translated by the word “hell,” in the 8th verse of the Common Version? That word is “hades,” and does not mean the “Gehenna,” or place of final punishment of the wicked. It is in certain later versions of the Sacred Text translated “the unseen.” Such a translation is more nearly correct, than is the word “hell,” and is not misleading. The indication here is that death and the unseen world, or place of departed spirits, both good and bad, followed the pale horse and his rider.

And what is “signified” by that which John saw and heard when the fifth seal was opened? We may learn, first, that the word “souls” is here used in the sense of spirits, and, secondly, that the spirit of man is conscious between death and the resurrection; for the resurrection of the martyrs then was, and still is, in the future. See chapter 20:4-6. We may next learn, by the “sign” here given, that between the death and the resurrection of the martyrs their blood will cry for vengeance upon those who slew them. Finally, we may learn, by this sign, that vengeance will not be taken, in behalf of the martyrs, on those that dwell on the earth, till all martyrdom for the Gospel's sake will have been ended.

What is “signified” in the record given in this chapter of the opening of the sixth seal of the seven-sealed book?

The signification, or meaning, of that which John beheld, when the mentioned seal was opened, was that which the Prophet Joel foretold, and which the Apostle Peter repeated. See Joel 2:30, 31; Acts 2:19, 20. We may learn also that the partial fulfillment of another prophecy is here recorded. See 2 Peter 3:19, in regard to the passing away of the heavens. The 15th, 16th and 17th verses of this chapter indicate the effect which the divinely ordained changes on the sun, and moon, and stars, and the heavens, and the mountains and islands, will have on the wicked of all classes that will then be on the earth.

Before we leave this chapter we should consider the 6th verse more definitely. What is signified by the declaration, “A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny”? This is but an explanation of the justice signified by the “pair of balances” mentioned in the preceding verse. It indicates the general relation of the prices of wheat and barley to each other. What should we say to those who fancy that the word “wheat” in this sentence, refers to the word of God, while the word “barley” refers to the human comments on that word? We should ask them whether human comments are worth one-third as much as the word of God, also whether the value of either can be estimated in money. We should then inform them that when we deal with God's word we should dismiss fancy, and bind ourselves up, and down, and in and under, to that which is written.

What may we say to those that declare that the sun, moon, and stars, mentioned in the record given of the opening of the sixth seal, mean prominent men? We might ask them what kind of men, in view of the results mentioned. Then we should state that the “stars” here mentioned are defined as “stars of heaven,” and in chapter 1:20 the “stars” there mentioned are defined as “angels of the “seven churches.” Are divine definitions of any value? If so, then let thorn be considered.

What may we say to those that suppose the chapter we have just considered is “all literal or all figurative,” and then proceed to give it largely or wholly a secular construction, or interpretation, or twist? We should invite their attention to that which John saw and heard when the fifth seal was opened, and ask them whether that was a figure or a reality—whether those “souls” were figurative or real, and whether the assurances given to them were figurative or realities—whether any real martyrs have ever died, and if so whether they have a real right to call for real ven-

geance. The simple truth is that John saw the history of the world indicated in the results of opening the first, second, third and fourth, seals, and then beheld the wickedness of the world indicated when the fifth seal was opened, for that wickedness is most clearly seen in the killing of martyrs. This is indicated in Matthew 23:34,35. Then at the opening of the sixth seal John saw the beginning of God's efforts to terrify the wicked. These efforts are represented as checked for a brief season in the 7th chapter, and then continued in the 8th and 9th chapters, likewise in the 11th chapter, also in the 14th and onward to the end of the 19th. Heathenism, Judaism, and Catholicism, are all under condemnation because of the blood of God's servants that they have shed, as well as for their other wickedness. Whoever overlooks this analysis of God's dealings with the three great divisions of rebels against the divine government is in hopeless confusion concerning the last book in the Bible.

CHAPTER VII

What is “signified” in the 7th chapter of this book for Bible readers to learn? The signification, or meaning, of that which John recorded in this chapter he saw and heard in the interval between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals of the seven-sealed book. In that interval he saw “four angels standing on the four corners of the earth,” and he makes mention of that which they were doing. He likewise saw “another angel ascending from the east,” and he informs us of that which that angel said to the four angels in regard to the earth, the sea, and the trees, and the sealing of “the servants of our God in their foreheads.” John next informs us that he heard the number of those that were sealed of the tribes of Israel. This is followed by an account of that which John saw and heard of a “great multitude” redeemed from among “all nations. “ In the end of the chapter we find an account of an interview between John and one of the “elders” with reference to the mentioned multitude.

What may we say of the expression “four corners of the earth as recorded in the 1st verse of this chapter? The Greek word there translated “corners” means also “an exterior angle,” and by implication it means “a dark corner, obscure place, extremity.” In view of these shades of meaning the best translation of this expression is “four extremities of the earth.” What should we say to those

who criticize this translation, as found in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, and speak of it as against the scientific discovery that the earth is a sphere, and does not have any corners? We should inform them that over two thousand years before any one of the men who professed to be scientists decided that the earth is a sphere God declared by one of his prophet, that it has a “circle,” which implies a sphere. See Isaiah 40:22. We should likewise inform the critics referred to that in Romans 6:19 we learn that the Holy Spirit has authorized the use of accommodative speech in addressing mankind. Besides, the so-called scientists speak of “the four quarters of the earth,” and “the four points of the compass,” likewise of “the rising of the sun,” and “the going down of the sun,” all of which are accommodative expressions. They are used to accommodate thought to the ignorance of mankind, and are authorized by that department of rhetoric which is designated “force of speech,” and “force” is largely determined by brevity.

What may we say of the “hundred and forty and four thousand” who were sealed in their foreheads? They are again mentioned in chapter 14:3-5, and in those scriptures are described. Were they of all the tribes of Israel? The tribe of Dan is not mentioned in the list of tribes here given. In judges 18:30, 31 we learn that the tribe of Dan was very persistent in idolatry, and this may have been the reason that it was blotted out. Thus, instead of following the error of those who speak of “the lost ten tribes,” we should speak of one tribe, only, as lost.

What is “signified” by that which is mentioned in the record given in the 9th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? In the 9th verse mention is made of the “great multitude” that John saw of “all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.” The hundred and forty-four thousand, mentioned in the former part of this chapter, were gathered from among the Jews. But this “great multitude” here referred to was gathered, as John saw it, from among the Gentiles, as well as Jews. Those gathered from among the Jews will not be all of the saved ones of the Jewish people, but they will be of the select class described in chapter 14:4,5, while the “great multitude” mentioned and described in the 9th verse, and on to the end of this chapter, will be, chiefly, of the Gentiles.

Why is the expression “day and night” used in the 15th verse? That, expression is here used even as the expression

day nor night” is used in chapter 14:11. In both places it is used according to Romans 6:19. The Holy Spirit directed inspired writers to use accommodative expressions in order to bring the great thought of God down to the smallness and weakness of man's capacity to understand. The same is true of the record given in Joshua 10:12-14, and many other records found in different parts of the Bible. The expression, “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” also the sentence, “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,” may be said to be of the same order. Mankind use accommodative speech in their efforts to convey their thoughts to each other, and the Lord has used such speech in making known some of his thoughts to mankind. Those who criticize such speech on the part of God show themselves to be unreasonable and abominable.

CHAPTER VIII

What is “signified” in the record given in this chapter? A record is here offered of the opening of THE seventh seal, and of some of the events which John saw after it had been opened. Those events, when briefly referred to, may be said to have been that John saw “seven angels,” to whom “were given seven trumpets,” and then another angel, after which a statement is given of four angels who sounded their trumpets, and of the events which followed their sounding.

What may we say of the “silence” referred to in the 1st verse of this chapter? It was very appropriate even from a human viewpoint. Histories of wars inform us that just before great battles, or the severest struggles in battles, there is, generally, an “ominous silence.” Such “silence” seems to be natural, and, thus, universal with armies immediately before entering their deadliest conflicts on the battlefield. In harmony with this, God caused “silence in heaven about the space of half an hour,” just before he began his severest judgments, on the earth, and on the heathen nations.

What is “signified” by the “seven trumpets” here mentioned? Seven is a perfect number in the Bible and when God decided to begin his overthrow of the heathen nation,, that were in the land of Canaan he commanded that seven priests should “bear before the ark seven trumpets.” See Joshua 6:4. He commanded also that they, and the army that they led, should go around a certain city for seven

days in succession, blowing their trumpets, and on the seventh day they should go around it seven times. He commanded further that in going around it the seventh time, on the seventh day, they should blow a “long blast” with the trumpets, and then the people should “shout with a great shout.” When this would be done God promised that “the wall of the city” should “fall down flat.” In harmony with all this God has proposed to use seven angels with seven trumpets, and that they shall sound their trumpets, one after the other, and that at the sounding of each trumpet a divine judgment shall be inflicted. In chapter 9:20,21 the indication is that the judgments which shall follow the sounding of six of the trumpets shall be inflicted on the heathen, who will then cover about “the third part” of the earth, even as they now do. Heathenism is the oldest rebellion now on the earth, and will, very appropriately, be the first to be made to feel the severity of the divine judgments that will be inflicted in the last days.

What is “signified” by the record given in the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of this chapter? We read of “another angel” that John saw in his vision, who “stood at the altar, having a golden censer,” likewise that “there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of the saints, upon the golden altar that was before the throne.” Here we learn that “the golden altar” “was before the throne” of God in heaven. This is in perfect harmony with Exodus 40:5, which informs us that God commanded Moses to put “the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony.” We may learn, likewise, that besides “the altar” and “golden censer,” and “incense,” John saw “smoke” and “fire” in heaven, and, finally, that fire was “cast into the earth.” In view of all this, what may we say to those who contend for literal musical instruments in the Church because “harps” are mentioned in chapters 5:8; 14:2, and thus, they say, will be in heaven? We should insist that all such should contend for everything else to be in the Church that is mentioned in the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of this chapter. What may we say of the official work of the angel mentioned in the verses now under consideration? It was very appropriate that there should be an offering to God made oil “the golden altar,” and that from the same “altar” fire should be taken and “cast into the earth.” See the twofold bearing of the Apostles as mentioned in 2 Corinthians, 2:15, 16. The casting of fire “into the earth” was an appropriate beginning of judgments upon the nations that

have forgotten God. Jehovah used fire to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24), and throughout the Old Testament ages he used “fire” as an element of destruction. See also Ezekiel 10:2. In view of this we can understand the appropriateness of the use that he will make of fire in his final judgments on the earth. All that is mentioned in this chapter is but an intimation of the final conflagration as referred to in 2 Peter 3:10, 12.

Will that occur literally which is mentioned in the 7th verse? The indication is that, as there was fire with hail in Egypt, as a judgment of God, upon a heathen king and his people (Exodus 9:22-25), so there shall be fire cast upon the earth when the heathen will begin to be afflicted in the last days.

Will “the third part of the sea” become blood literally when the second angel will sound his trumpet? The indication is that it will be, even as waters became blood when God inflicted his judgments on the heathen in Egypt. See Exodus 7:19-21.

In view of that which has just been stated, we are prepared to believe that the judgment recorded in connection with the sounding of the third angel's trumpet will be literally accomplished.

And what of the fourth angel? All that is recorded concerning him, and the sounding of his trumpet, with that which followed it, will as literally occur as that God's threatening of darkness upon the Egyptians did literally occur. See Exodus 10:21-23.

In Romans 15:4 we are informed that “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” And, by reason of having learned of God's literal judgments upon the heathen in Egypt, we are enabled to understand that he will finally inflict literal judgments upon all the heathen on the earth. Besides, having learned that God began his inflictions in Egypt on the vegetable and animal kingdoms, together with the waters, and the light of day, before he directly inflicted judgments on the Egyptians, we are prepared to understand that he will do the in the period of his judgments on the heathen, near the end of time.

What may we say of the record offered in the last verse of this chapter? It signifies that the sounding of the trumpets of the last three angels, of the seven that will receive trumpets, will be followed by greater inflictions than those which will follow the sounding of those who will precede them. The inflictions which will follow the sounding of

the first, second, third and fourth trumpets will be but the “beginning of sorrows.”

CHAPTER IX

Of what are we informed in this chapter? We are informed of the sounding of the trumpets given to the fifth and sixth angels that John saw in this part of his vision, likewise of the “plagues” that followed the sounding of them.

Will literal locusts come “upon the earth” or that part of it which will be inhabited by the heathen, when the fifth angel will sound? The indication is that they will be as literal, or real, as were the locusts that came upon the heathen in Egypt. See Exodus 10:12-15. “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” But if “the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all the green grass was burnt up,” as is stated in the 7th verse of the preceding chapter, why should the locusts mentioned in this chapter be commanded “that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree”? The answer to this question is that we are not informed of the length of time that will pass between the sounding of each of the several trumpets mentioned in the 8th chapter, except that the fifth plague will continue “five months,,” and the sixth plague will continue “an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year.”

But what of the mission of the locusts referred to in the 4th verse of the chapter now under consideration? It will be to “torment” “those men” who will not have “the seal of God in their foreheads,” when the fifth angel will sound his trumpet. This suggests the fact that the land where the children of Israel were in Egypt was not afflicted by the plagues sent on the Egyptians. See Exodus 9:26.

What of the description given by the Apostle John of the appearance of the locusts mentioned in this chapter? It should be accepted, even as we should accept that which is said of the disposition and character of the heathen referred to in the 20th and 21st verses of this chapter.

And what of the “king” over those locusts, and his name? The declaration is here made that he will be “the angel of the bottomless pit.” The meaning of his name is “destroyer,” as that name is given in the Hebrew language, also in the Greek, and is a very appropriate name.

What should we say to those who contend that the “locusts” here mentioned were soldiers of a certain army? We should state to them that their contention is a specimen of ungodly

fiction, and should ask them, What army was ever commanded as those locusts were, and whose mission was to “torment” for “five months” those who had not “the seal of God in their foreheads?”

What is signified by the record given, in this chapter, of the sounding of the sixth trumpet? We may learn that John “heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God.” Here is another evidence concerning the proper place for the golden altar in the tabernacle and temple. In heaven John saw it “before the throne” (chapter 8:3), and here he, saw it before God. As God and his throne are both in heaven, and the most holy place in the tabernacle and temple was intended to typify heaven, the, conclusion is evident that Paul's statements in Hebrews 9:3, 4 should be accepted as the end of controversy on this subject.

What of the four angels mentioned in the 14th and 15th verses? The number of those angels is in harmony with the number of periods of time mentioned in the 15th verse, “an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year,” and their mission will be “to slay the third part of men.”

What may we say in response to those who contend that John had reference, in this instance, to the Arabian army fighting in behalf of Mohammedanism? Their contention is merely fanciful, and strictly inconsistent. If John did not mean literally that which he wrote in regard to the number of the army here mentioned, then he did not mean that “the third part of men” should be killed by that army, and it is all fanciful. But an army of that number of men was never marshaled on earth, especially of horsemen.

What may we learn by considering the 20th and 21st verses? In them we find plain testimony to the effect that the plagues referred to in this chapter, and the one preceding it, will be inflicted on the heathen, for they are here mentioned as worshipers of “devils, and idols” of various kinds. All idol worship is offered to devils. (I Corinthians 10:20.) See also Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17.

In view of the “plagues” mentioned in this chapter, and the one preceding it, all of which will be inflicted on the heathen before the end of time, we may keep our eyes on the heathen nations. While they are not disturbed by any of the “plagues” here referred to we may feel assured that the end of the Gospel Age has not yet come. Heathenism is the oldest rebellion against God that is in ex-

istence among the nations, and will be the first to be rebuked. The end cannot come while heathenism is not afflicted by anything except that which is common among nations. The last two verses of this chapter clearly indicate that the heathen nations will remain in heathenism till the judgments of God will come upon them, and that even then they will not repent. This is a saddening comment on the work of foreign missionary societies, and on all sentimentalism about "taking the world for Christ." The Gospel was once established among the chief heathen nations, but the people who professed to be Christians, in those nations, did not appreciate it aright, but let it die out of their midst. They forgot God, and in them will be fulfilled the saying that is written in Psalm 9:17. All talk about converting the heathen nations, as such, to the Lord Jesus Christ, is the outgrowth of ignorance of the Bible, and of human conceit in regard to the power of humanly organized missionary societies.

CHAPTER X

What is "signified" for us in this chapter? John here informs us that between the sounding of the sixth and the seventh trumpets he saw "another mighty angel come down from heaven," also that "he had in his hand a little book," and "cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth," and that "when he cried seven thunders uttered their voices," but that John by "a voice from heaven" was forbidden to write that which the seven thunders uttered. John next informs us that the "mighty angel," of whom he here writes, swore "that there should be time no longer," but that "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." John further informs us that he was told by "the voice" which he had heard from heaven to take "the little book" from the hand of the angel who held it, and that when the angel gave it to him he told him to eat it, and of the effect it should have on him. Then John declares that he took the book and ate it, and informs us of the effect it had on him, also that the angel said to him that he "must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

What may we say of the angel of whom John wrote in this chapter? His appearance was glorious, his voice was glorious, and his mission was glorious. The account here given of the "little book" which he held in his hand suggests

Ezekiel 3:1-4. In each instance the eating of the book signified preparation for speaking the words of God to man, and is in harmony with John 7:37-39.

What may we say of the “seven thunders” referred to in the 3rd and 4th verses of this chapter? As John was not permitted to write that which they uttered we are not informed concerning their utterances. But what of the book that is titled “The Voice of the Seven Thunders”? To say the least, that book has a presumptuous title. Its author presumed to write that which the Apostle John, by “a voice from heaven,” was forbidden to write! That voice said to him, “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.” Yet a certain uninspired author presumed to write “the voice of the seven thunders “! 1 What is worse, that book has been very popular among a people professing to be “disciples of Christ”!!! This is all lamentable, and pitiable, beyond expression, for it grossly violates 1 Peter 4:11.

What of the 6th and 7th verses? They must be considered together in order to be understood. In the last of the 6th verse is recorded the declaration, “that there should be time no longer,” and yet the 7th verse mentions the continuance of time for a period. In view of this we may consider the declaration, now before us, as we should consider God's decision in Genesis 6:13. God said 'unto Noah, “The end of all flesh is come before me,” yet he did not overwhelm the world with a flood till after he had given Noah time to build the ark. Thus in this instance God said through a certain angel that “there should be time no longer,” yet he intended to suffer time to continue till after the seventh angel should “begin to sound.” Then “the mystery of God” shall be finished, yet much time, as man counts it, will, even then, be required.

What is “signified” by the fact that John, in his vision, saw himself obey the angel who told him to take the little book from the hand of the angel who held it, and eat it? The signification, or meaning, of that fact is plainly stated in the last verse of this chapter. It declares, “Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” See also Ezekiel 3:1-4. The word of God must be within a man before he can speak it to others. Thus it was with the Prophet Ezekiel, and thus with the Apostle John. See also John 7:37-39.

CHAPTER XI

And what is here revealed for our edification? John here reveals to us that a reed was given to him, and he was commanded to measure “the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein,” but was commanded not to measure “the court which is without the temple,” and he was told why he should not measure it. John next makes a revelation to us concerning two witnesses who should prophesy, and then he informs us further with reference to them, and the manner in which they will be treated on earth, also the treatment they will receive from heaven. John informs us next of an earthquake that will occur in Jerusalem, and of its results. The chapter is ended with an account of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and of the events which will occur soon after it will be sounded, as John saw them in his vision.

What may we say of the former part of this chapter? From the beginning of the 1st verse to the end of the 13th it is a record, in part, of that which John saw and heard between the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets. In view of this it should be regarded as a continuance of the 10th chapter. In the 7th chapter of this book we find a record of that which John saw and heard in his vision between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals, of the seven-sealed book. Then in the 10th chapter and the first part of THE 11th, we find an account of the vision he had during the interval between the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets.

What of the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? In them John informs us plainly that he received a reed “like unto a rod,” and was told to measure the Jewish temple, and the altar, and those who “worship therein.” That which is “signified” by the measuring that John was required to do, in this instance, is indicated by 2 Kings 21:13, also Isaiah 28:17. As God had destroyed Samaria by giving it into the hands of its enemies so he threatened to do with Jerusalem. This is the meaning of the prophecy that he would “stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab.” He had brought severe judgments on the house of Ahab. Isaiah 28:17 has the same bearing. In view of this we can understand what was meant by measuring the temple, and altar, and those that worshiped in the temple. It is true that the temple which had been built in Jerusalem was in ruins at THE time that John had this vision. But that (did not prevent God from

showing it to John in a vision any more than it prevented him from showing to an Old Testament prophet “the frame of a city,” while that city was in ruins. See Ezekiel 40th chapter. Besides, God is the one who “calletth those things which be not as though they were.” See Romans 4:17. Reference is here made in the 1st verse of this chapter to the Jewish temple, and the Jewish altar, and the Jewish worshipers. This is the plain and most scriptural view, and is confirmed by the 2nd verse, which refers to “the court which is without the temple.” Besides, the statements that “the court of the temple is given unto the Gentiles,” and that “the holy city shall they tread under foot,” are further confirmation that these verses now under consideration should be accepted in their most natural and literal application. For, in Luke 21:24, we find Christ's prophecy that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentile,,,, for a period. In Romans 11:25 we find more on this subject. Finally, the actual facts are that Jerusalem is yet “trodden down of the Gentiles.”

But what of the “forty and two months” here mentioned? On the scriptural principle of a day for a year (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:4-6), the prophecy here recorded means twelve hundred and sixty years, by counting thirty days as a month. In view of this we need to date the utter overthrow of Jerusalem, as far as Jewish privileges were concerned, to the year 1187, when it was overcome by the Turks, to remain under their dominion till the present, and, perhaps, for many years to come. Between the years A. D. 70 and A. D. 1187 Jerusalem was much of the time in dispute. between different nations. But since 1187 it has, with but slight exception, been wholly under the dominion of the Turks. Whether any part of the interval between the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 and its final overthrow by the Turks in the year 1187 was intended by the Lord to be included in the 1,260 years here referred to we are not informed. Therefore, we cannot safely venture to name the date when Jerusalem will pass from under Gentile dominion, except as indicated in Daniel 8:13,14.

What of the two witnesses mentioned in the 3rd verse, and onward to the end of the 12th? In the 4th verse we read that which refers us to Zechariah 4:3, 14, and there we read of “two olive trees” which are “the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. “ The literal meaning of the expression “anointed ones,” in this instance, is “sons of oil,” Then in Genesis 19th chapter

we read of “two angels,” who were in the form of men, and had human bodies, even such bodies as could be fed by material food. Men of Sodom intended to subject them to infamous treatment, and they smote those men with blindness, and then said, “We will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.” In Genesis 18th chapter we learn that Abraham saw “three men,” one of whom, the record indicates, represented the Lord himself, and he talked with Abraham after the others had left him. See Genesis 18:16-33. With all this before us we are assured that the two angels, in the form of men, who entered Sodom on the evening before it was destroyed were “two witnesses” who had power to destroy those who purposed to hurt them, and that they did destroy them. In view of all this we are prepared to understand that those “two witnesses” will, at the appointed time, enter Jerusalem even as they entered Sodom, and that they will be killed there. Notice in the 8th verse that Jerusalem “where also our Lord was crucified” is “the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom.” This suggests the 18th and 19th chapters of Genesis, which we have already referred to. With this much settled we can easily accept all else that is here stated concerning those witnesses as real and literal. The vile men of Sodom were not suffered to abuse these “two witnesses,” but the vile men of Jerusalem, “which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt,” will be suffered to kill them and refuse their bodies a burial, and will be suffered to rejoice by reason of their victory over them. But “after three days and a half,” which is near the same length of time that Christ's body was in the grave, the bodies of those “two witnesses,” who are called “prophets” also, will, by “the Spirit of life from God” be raised from the dead, even as Christ's body was raised. Then they will ascend “up to heaven in a cloud,” even as Christ ascended. All this is as simple, clear and easy to be understood, as is the history of Christ's life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, or as is the story of Sodom's destruction by “two angels.” All that we need in order to accept it just as recorded is plain and simple faith.

But what of the statement in the 3rd verse that those “two witnesses” “shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days clothed in sackcloth”? That will be the period during which Jerusalem will be “trodden down of the Gentiles.” In chapter 8:13 we read of an angel who will utter lamenting words because of calamities that will

come upon mankind. In harmony with this these two angels, witnesses, or prophets, will prophesy in mourning throughout the period of Jerusalem's utter desolation, as far as Jewish power will be concerned. In harmony with this we find that "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against" those witnesses, and "shall overcome them and kill them." This suggests Daniel 7:21, and the connection, in which it is recorded. The power here spoken of will be in the ascendancy at Jerusalem up to the time when the seventh trumpet shall "begin to sound," and the time will be near at hand when "the mystery of God" will be "finished." The last act of iniquity on the part of the men of Sodom, as far as we are informed was an effort to get hold of the "two angels" that God sent into their city, that they might abuse them. And the last act, that is recorded, of the iniquity of the persecuting power, will be to kill the "two witnesses" of God that shall enter Jerusalem at some future date, and then refuse their bodies a burial. But notice Daniel 7:21, 22, and observe that he says of that power, "I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment [justice] was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." All this is in perfect harmony with the record given in the chapter of John's vision that is now before us. Soon after the persecuting power will have "overcome" the "two witnesses," mentioned in this chapter, the seventh angel having a trumpet will begin to sound it, and then there will be "great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Thus Daniel and John unite in their prophecy on this subject. This will become more evident as we read the 18th verse, and compare the latter part of it with Daniel 7:22, especially in that which both of them declare concerning "the saints."

What may we say of the 13th verse? It indicates the last of God's judgments on Jerusalem as a city, and upon the Jews as a people. They will receive the judgment mentioned in this verse as from God, and will give "glory to the God of heaven." Judaism is, in regard to antiquity or age, the second rebellion against God, and will be the second to be rebuked by divine judgments in the form of miracles. Then, and not till then, will blindness be taken from the minds of the Jews, as far as the divine record

informs us concerning them. See Romans 11:25; Luke 21:24.

Will “the nations” be ready to accept Christ when the time will come for him to take unto him his “great power”? The 18th verse indicates that they will not be ready. On the contrary, they will be “angry.” The last of the 19th verse intimates that “lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail” will be needed in order to subjugate them. Here is another reflection against the work of missionary societies among the nations, and against the sentimentalism about “taking the world for Christ.”

In conclusion, a few words of precaution should be given. We should be careful not to suppose that because John saw the time when God will take unto himself, 'or exercise, his great power, therefore all that is mentioned in the 18th verse will be at once accomplished. The nations may at once become angry, but we ought not to suppose that the dead will at once be judged, nor that the righteous will at once be rewarded. Neither should we suppose that the wicked will all be, at once, destroyed. In Genesis 6:13 God said, “The end of all flesh is come before me,” yet the flood was not brought over the earth till Noah had time to build the ark. “If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God.” (I Peter 4:11.) In obedience to this command we should always proceed in regard to religious doctrine and practice, worship and work, and even in dealing with prophecy.

CHAPTER XII

Of what does the Apostle John make a revelation in this chapter? He here reveals that part of his vision in which the angel of God “signified” to him the glory of the Jewish nation as the mother of our Savior through a woman, the birth of our Savior, and the persecution planned against him, and his Church. He reveals, likewise, the origin of the persecuting power, in heaven, his overthrow in heaven, and his fall to the earth, and his wrath against God's people in all ages from the time he was cast down to the earth.

Who was the woman referred to in the 1st and 2nd verses in this chapter? The true believers of the Jewish church, is represented by the mother of our Savior, were here revealed to John in a picture, even as Jacob's dream (Genesis 28:12-15), and Joseph's dreams (Genesis 37:5-11), were Rev-

elations in pictures. And if God caused Joseph to dream that “the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance” to him, in order to indicate his earthly supremacy and glory, why would not God cause John to see in a vision “ a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars” to indicate the spiritual glory of the Jewish church as represented by the one whom God would choose to bring forth the “man child” who was to “rule all nations with a rod of iron”? That one expression “rod of iron” indicates the identity of this “man child.” See chapter 2:27; 19:15, also Psalm 2:9. That “man child” was the infant Jesus, and the woman who brought him forth was, as a person, named Mary, and was espoused to a man named Joseph of the offspring of David. See Matthew 1:18-25. She was the most highly exalted woman of the Jewish nation. Her glory, because she was chosen to give the world's Redeemer his human body, is indicated in Luke 1:35-55. All this is as plain as Joseph's dream concerning the sun, moon, and stars. Joseph's father and his brethren understood the general indication of his vision which he had in a dream, and why cannot all who read John's vision, which he had while “in the Spirit,” understand it? If fancy is dismissed, and the plain record is considered, all will be clear on this question. Does some one say that Mary was never in heaven? If so we may say that she was a part of the divine plan to redeem the world, and was thus in heaven even as the twelve tribes and the Apostles were.

But what of the “great red dragon” mentioned in the 3rd and 4th verses? In the 9th verse of this chapter we learn that he was, and is, “the devil.” As a persecuting power he showed himself in heaven as “the accuser.” On earth he has manifested himself most fully in the disposition and power revealed to John in the picture, or sign, of which he wrote in the 17th chapter of this book. In view of such manifestation he very appropriately had “seven heads and ten horns” when John first saw him. Then, in view of the success he made in betraying angels to his side while he was yet in heaven he is represented as drawing, with his tail, “the third part of the stars of heaven.” In chapter 1:20 earthly messengers were represented by “stars,” and here angels of heaven are represented by ‘stars,’ but they are here spoken of as “stars of heaven.” When the devil and his angels were defeated in heaven they were all cast out, and in this sense he is justly charged, as is mentioned in the 4th verse, with casting those “stars

of heaven” “to the earth.” See Luke 10:18, also 2 Peter 2:4. Christ as “the Word of God,” and “the First Born of every creature,” was a witness of the devil's defeat in heaven, and of the fact that he and his angels were cast down to the earth. Besides, the devil, as a persecuting power, inspired Herod to try to put to death the “man child” who was born to “rule all nations with a rod of iron.”. See Matthew 2nd chapter. He was finally put to death by the authority of a governor in a province of heathen Rome, because he was urged to do so by the Jews. The rulers of both of those nations were inspired by “that old serpent called the Devil and Satan.” But after his death the “man-child” was, in due time, “caught up unto God and his throne.”

But what of “the woman” when she “fled into the wilderness” to escape the persecution of the dragon? The true believers in the Jewish church, with whom the mother of our Savior was numbered (Acts 1:14), became members of the Gospel Church. The transition, or change, from the former church to the latter was made on the day of Pentecost mentioned in the 2nd chapter of Acts. The mother of our Savior was one of those who made the change. The thousand two hundred and three-score days, of which we read in the 6th verse, also the “time,” “times” and “half a time,” mentioned in the 14th verse, refer to the period of persecution of the Church. That period is made up of shorter periods which began in the 1st Century, and were continued at intervals, till the voice of reformation became so strong that persecution by fire and sword against believers in Christ was ended, at least in several countries.

What may we say of those who fix a definite date for the beginning and ending of the 1,260 years of persecution which we have been considering? They are more definite than history will justify, for they cannot find 1,260 years of unbroken persecution of the believers in Christ. But if they will consider that the 1,260 years of persecution are made up of periods, between which there were intervals of relief to believers, they will be more nearly safe in their calculations.

But what should we say of those who declare that the “woman” here mentioned was the one referred to in the 17th chapter of this book, also that the “man child” was the pope of Rome, and that the “dragon” was pagan Rome? We, should say that such teaching is wrong in every particular—terribly and dangerously wrong. If Psalm 2-9,

taken. with chapters 2:27 and 19:15 of this book that we are now considering, do not prove that Christ was and is the “mail child” here referred to, then divine testimony cannot prove any other fact. Besides, the declaration, that he was “caught up unto God and to his throne,” should be sufficient on this subject without the direct testimony in regard to ruling with “a rod of iron” set forth in the other scriptures referred to. Then the fact that the 9th verse of this chapter declares that “the great dragon” is “that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,” settles all question in regard to the person of the “great red dragon” as mentioned in the 3rd verse. In the next chapter we shall learn that the dragon gave to the “beast,” that “signified” pagan Rome, “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” But this does not make the dragon the same person as that beast, nor the same as the pope. We should remember 1 Peter 4:11, and let sectarian commentaries alone, especially in regard to John's vision. The doctrine that the “dragon” was pagan Rome means that when pagan Rome ceased to be then the devil ceased to be, for the dragon was the devil.

What is revealed to us by the record here given of the “war in heaven,” beginning with the 7th verse? The revelation is that the devil was once in heaven, and that he became “the accuser” of the “brethren” there, also that he “accused them before our God day and night,” which means continually. The expression “day and night,” when used with reference to heaven, is accommodative, and means constantly. The devil was, therefore, of the heavenly hosts, but he fell from his first estate through “pride.” This is indicated in I Timothy 3:6. God created him so that he could fall, and he fell. Besides, he drew others to his side, but Michael, the arch-angel (Jude 9th verse), did not fall with him. On the contrary, he opposed the devil after he fell. Other angels stood with Michael, while some of the angels, probably “a third part” (verse 4), stood with the devil. War was introduced. The devil, or dragon, was defeated, and “was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” That must have been at a time which pertained to the early history of the earth, for our first parents seem, from the record given of them, not to have been in the garden of Eden long before “that old serpent” was there. What may we say of the 11th verse? It indicates that Michael, and those angels who stood with him in the war which was waged in heaven, did their fighting in view of the con-

flict that Christ was destined to have with the devil here on earth. That is to say, they were encouraged to fight against the devil in view of the blood of Christ which should be shed in Christ's opposition to the devil. They seemed to have been informed of that which Christ would suffer in opposing the devil, and for that reason they "loved not their lives unto the death." This is all plain testimony, and should be accepted without question.

What is the bearing of the expression "short time" as recorded in the last of the 12th verse? It must be considered in the light of 2 Peter 3:8, in order to be understood.

What is meant by the word "water" in the 14th and 15th verses? In Isaiah 8:7 the word "waters" is used to represent the overwhelming power of the Babylonian king that should come against the Jews. This is an index to its use in this instance. Water was used as an element of destruction in the flood, and has been figuratively used since then in the same sense. Thus the record of the persecution against the Church, especially in the days of unmolested persecution, refers to "water" as an element of destruction. The devil has intended to destroy the Church by overwhelming it with persecution.

What is indicated by the refuge for the woman, as mentioned in the 6th and 14th verses? The indication is that the Church lived through the darkest ages of persecution, even if historians have not been able to find a record of it. The word "church" means "called out," and thus means "separate." Those, therefore, who separated themselves from the corruptions of the generation in which they lived, and died for Christ's sake, or were willing to die for him, made up the Church. They may not have obeyed the doctrine of Christ in its perfection, yet when they sealed their faith in Christ by their life's blood they showed the supreme test of their faith, and the Savior declared that they will be saved. See Matthew 10:39.

What is implied in the last verse of this chapter? The implication is that when the devil was defeated in his first purpose, to destroy true believers from the earth, he did not become discouraged, but proceeded to make war "with the remnant" of believers. From then till the present he has continued in the same business. Nor will he cease till he will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. See chapter 20:1-3. But even then he will not cease forever, for when he will have been "loosed out of his prison" he will gather together an army, and will compass "the camp of

the saints about, and the beloved city.” See chapter 20:7-9.

Does some one inquire why God brought a being into existence who would fall, and become the eternal enemy of mankind? The answer is that God desired tried spirits to be with him forever, and he needed some one to try them. In this sense the devil is a servant of God, and serves his purpose. This is intimated, if not implied, in Matthew 4:10. He served God's purpose in heaven in trying or testing the angels. All who preferred him to God for a leader were suffered to do so, and then the “war” was introduced in heaven. After Satan was cast to the earth he began to serve God's purpose here in testing whether mankind would prefer to serve him or God. But why has God suffered the ,devil to persecute mankind even unto the death of the body? The answer is, that the severer the persecution has been,

in all ages, the purer the lives of God's servants have been, in all ages. In proportion as God's people have been released from severe persecution, the more careless and wayward, corrupt and abominable, they have become. This explains God's need for papal Rome as a persecutor. When heathen emperors favored the Church it became proud and corrupt.

Before we leave this chapter we should consider that “the great red dragon,” who is “that old serpent called the Devil and Satan,” as John saw him had “seven heads and ten horns.” In the 1st and 2nd verses of the next chapter we find an indication that the reason he was of such appearance to John in his vision was that he should afterward manifest himself in a “beast” “having seven heads and ten horns.” That beast represented a city built on “seven mountains,” which was to be the seat of a government which should be supported for a time by ten kingdoms. See chapter 17:9-18.

In view of all that has just been stated can any one reasonably doubt that Satan was once in heaven? No. All doubt on that subject is the result of fancy and not reason. When John informs us that he saw “in heaven” “a great red dragon,” and then declares that “the great dragon” was “that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,” all reasonable doubt concerning the origin and person of the devil is ruled out. What may we then say of the notion that the devil originated with the serpent spoken of in Genesis 3rd chapter? It ignores John's testimony in this chapter of his vision, Besides,

that notion is based on accommodative language, is in opposition to Luke 10:18, and is purely fanciful. The subtlety and speech attributed to the serpent, in Genesis 3:15, may be as justly regarded accommodative as were the wisdom and speech of the ass that Balaam rode. See Numbers 22:28-30. God enabled the ass to speak, and the devil enabled the serpent to speak. Besides, Peter was called "Satan" when he did that which the serpent did, namely, contradicted God. But Peter, the apostle, was not Satan himself; nor was the serpent that spoke to Eve Satan himself, nor was pagan Rome the dragon, but the dragon gave to pagan Rome as a beast his "power, and his seat, and great authority."

CHAPTER XIII

What has the Apostle John revealed to us by that which is "signified" in this chapter? The revelation here is concerning a certain "beast," and that "the dragon" mentioned in the previous chapter gave to that "beast" "his power, and his seat, and great authority." John reveals also that he saw another "beast" which he described, and then "an image to the beast," with a statement of the purpose of that "image." The chapter is ended with a statement concerning "the number of the beast."

What may we say of the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? They need to be read in connection with Daniel 7th chapter, in which we have an account of the beast of "ten horns." Then in the 17th chapter we find an account of a "scarlet colored beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." In that chapter we learn that the "seven heads are seven mountains," and the "ten horns * * are ten kings." As Rome is "the seven-hilled city" of the world, we here have an index that is sure in regard to the beast referred to in the verses under consideration. That beast was heathen Rome, whose capital city is oil seven hills, or mountains, and John here informs us that the devil gave to that beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority. "

What may we say of the 3rd verse of this chapter? Heathen Rome received a deadly wound when its emperor Constantine, in the 4th Century, became a professed Christian, and gave favorable commands concerning the Church. Then, as historians inform us, costly church buildings were erected, and the Church became popular. As a result, it became corrupt from a moral viewpoint, and was never persecuted afterward sufficiently to purge out its low grade of reli-

ious devotion. On the contrary, it continued to decline in purity of life, as well as in doctrine, and, finally, the apostasy was established. As a further result, another persecuting power was established, and this is “signified” by “another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” This will become more evident as we proceed in considering this chapter.

But the “deadly wound was healed,” and this occurred when “Christian Rome” became “papal Rome,” and again became a persecuting power, as is indicated in the 11th verse of this chapter, and onward to its close.

What of the 4th verse? The worship of the dragon was the worship of the devil, because all idol-worship is devil-worship. See I Corinthians 10:20. For several hundred years heathen Rome was the supreme political power of the world, and other nations could not make war with it and succeed.

What of the 5th, 6th and 7th verses? They should be considered in the light of the 7th chapter of Daniel.

What of the 8th verse) In it the saints are referred to as those whose names are written in “the book of life.” In the 7th verse the statement is made that heathen Rome, as a “beast,” should “overcome” the saints, and here the statement is implied that the saints would not worship him. As a result they were put to death, and thus were “overcome” as far as this life is concerned. They were not authorized to fight for their lives with carnal weapons, and, therefore, they were not to kill anyone on account of religion. See Matthew 26:52. On the contrary, they were to be patient, even unto death. Reference is made to all this in the 10th verse of this chapter, especially in the declaration, “Here is the patience of the saints.”

What may we say of the “beast” mentioned in the 11th verse, and onward to the end of this chapter? That beast, as John saw him, “had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. “ This is a clear index to papal Rome. It has some items of the doctrine of Christ, yet is a persecuting power, and all this is strikingly represented by “two horns like a lamb,” and speech “as a dragon.” This change from one beast to another began to be made with the “deadly wound,” which pagan Rome received at the time that Constantine professed faith in Christ, and that change was completed when the first of the Romish bishops was declared to be “Universal Bishop.” Thus the healing of

the deadly wound was begun when the Church began to decline in godliness, and, as a result, began to become popular with the world. Constantine's professed conversion did not occur till a brief period before his death, we are informed. He died A. D. 337.

What is indicated in the 12th verse? The indication here is that the laws of pagan Rome were adopted and enforced by papal Rome, likewise that certain phases of pagan Rome's idolatry were adopted by papal Rome. Such indication is in perfect harmony with the facts. Papal Rome, or the Roman Catholic church, did adopt much of the pagan code in civil statutes, and, likewise, adopted some of the pagan religion in a modified form. The Roman Catholic religion is a combination of Paganism, Judaism, and the Gospel. As a system it is a persecuting arrangement, and this is "signified" by the fact that it "spake as a dragon" when John saw it in his vision. The dragon was a persecutor in heaven, and has been the author of all persecution on earth.

What may we say of the 13th and 14th verses? They should be read in connection with 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, Is the Roman Catholic church a worker of miracles? Only as far as God suffers the dragon to help her in her work of deceiving mankind. Many Romanists have been led to believe that some of the so-called saints have been workers of miracles, and, perhaps, all of them believe that the priests can bless and curse them in a miraculous manner. They all pretend to believe that a priest's prayer or blessing can change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, also that his prayer, or blessing, will change common water into so-called "holy water." All of these are of the "lying wonders" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:9.

But what of "the image of the beast" mentioned in the 14th and 15th verses? Rome's doctrine, as set forth in her code of persecution and ritual, will answer to that which is here said of "the image of the beast." The enforcing of that doctrine is here expressed by the words, "give life unto the image of the beast." The Greek word here translated "life" means also "a characteristic spirit," and this seems to be its meaning in this instance. The papal power "had power" to give a characteristic spirit unto "the image of the beast." That "spirit" was such as made it also a persecuting power. This is evidently correct, as we may judge from the remainder of the verse, which declares that the

“life” here referred to was, “that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast [bow down to Rome's doctrine] should be killed.” See also the 17th verse.

What of the last verse of this chapter? The numerical value of the Greek letters in the Greek words which mean “The Latin Kingdom,” taken together make the sum six hundred and sixty-six.

But what is “the mark” of the beast? The Romanist crossing his forehead with his finger dipped in so-called “holy water” is an index to the meaning of “the mark” of which John here wrote. In the 17th verse the apostle here refers to the well-known disposition of Romanists to be clannish and exclusive. They will patronize each other, and will refuse to patronize those who are not of their faith, more generally, perhaps, than any other religious people. In those countries that are exclusively Romish they show the disposition to prevent all who are not of their faith from buying and selling.

CHAPTER XIV

What does John signify or reveal in this chapter for us to consider? First of all he reveals that he saw Christ, and the hundred and forty-four thousand, who are declared to be of a special class. Next he reveals that he heard voices, and a new song which was sung by a select company. Then John informs us in this revelation that he “saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,” and of that which the mentioned angel said. To this he adds that he “saw another angel,” who declared the fall of Babylon, and the reason that she fell. This is followed by a record of “a third angel” and of that which the “third angel” said with reference to the beast, and worshiping him, and the punishment for so doing. Then John makes mention of “the patience of the saints,” and the blessedness of “the dead who die in the Lord.” In the latter part of this chapter is a record of Christ as a reaper, and of several angels, two of whom spoke with reference to reaping the earth, and one of whom used “a sharp sickle” to gather “the vine of the earth.” The chapter is ended with an account of “the great wine press of the wrath of God.”

What may we say of the period in John's vision which the record found in this chapter covers? This chapter and the next cover the period which passed between his vision of

the rise of pagan Rome, followed by papal Rome, and the fall of papal Rome. That period is now near its conclusion.

May the fact that mention is made in the 2nd verse of this chapter that John heard “harpers harping with their harps” be lawfully used in favor of instrumental music in the worship? No, not any more so than the fact that the character of those who will use the harps there mentioned may be used in favor of the celibacy of all men in the Church. They “were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God. “ See 4th and 5th verses. The Apostle Paul was one of that class, and ordinary mortals do not rank with such. They sang a song which no one “could learn” except the “hundred and forty and four thousand.” We might as well try to adopt such a song, as to adopt such instruments of music.

What of the angel mentioned in the 6th and 7th verses? That angel represented the same that was indicated by the angel mentioned in the 10th chapter who had a “little book” which he gave John to eat, and when he had eaten it said to him, “Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” This is evident when we consider that in the last of the 6th verse of the chapter before us we read that this “everlasting gospel” was to be preached “to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people.” John is still prophesying, and the Gospel is still offered to mankind. Thus it will be till the end, and, therefore, during the period between the time that John saw his vision and the end of time.

What of the 7th verse? In that verse John heard a proclamation which may be spoken of as a warning to all mankind, and which should be considered in view of the divine judgments.

How should we regard the declaration, “Babylon is fallen”? We should regard it in the light of the declaration, “His judgment is come,” as recorded in the 7th verse. The period that was covered by that which John saw and heard, as recorded in this chapter, was a part of the period of the sounding of the seventh trumpet. See chapter 10:7. The 8th verse of the chapter now before us, therefore, simply announces the divine decision in regard to mystic Babylon, even as in Genesis 6:13 God announced his decision to destroy “all flesh.” But the decision, was rendered in

each instance before it began to be enforced. Babylon has begun to fall, for civil power has been taken from the pope. But it has not yet been overthrown.

What of the third angel and the record given in the 9th, 10th and 11th verses of that which he said? All this, as here recorded, may be safely declared to be a warning against persons becoming Romanists. That which is here threatened against those who “worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,” should be sufficient to cause all who are free from Romanism to remain free, and all who are under the influence of it to reject it forever.

What may we learn by considering the 11th verse, as evidence on the question of punishment, or “torment”? In it the doctrine of everlasting “torment” is clearly-taught, at least with reference to Romanists, and if they are to be punished forever so will all other evil-doers.

What of the 12th verse? The “patience of the saints,” and of them that “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ,” may certainly be regarded as appropriately mentioned in this connection. Much “patience” is required on the part of God's servants, in order to sustain them in the midst of all the efforts that are made by flattery and threatening to induce them to copy after Rome, and thereby worship the beast. The chief danger to which the saints are subjected is that they are liable to become discouraged in the midst of long delays, and the obscurity in which they are required to live. Multitudes become discouraged when they are overshadowed by others, and when they see a show of success constantly made by others, while they are not making such a show. They are liable to forget that the promise is to the faithful, and that the Savior says, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” See chapter 2:10. As a result, they are liable to adopt some of Rome's popular methods by which she appeals to the “desires of the flesh, and of the eyes, and to the pride of life.” Instrumental music is of those methods, and so are church fairs, festivals, and other methods of raising money, together with all societies in addition to the Church. Those who adopt any of these methods are worshipers of the beast, and they show that they are possessed of the spirit of the dragon. They are persecutors of those who oppose them, and their motto seems to be, “We will use you or abuse you.” Only those whose “patience” will be sufficient to

resist the flattery and threatenings of such, with all other discouraging prospects, will be fit to enter heaven.

What of the 13th verse? It is very appropriate in this connection, and should be accepted, as divinely intended, to encourage the saints in the midst of all the trials of life. It is a plain statement of blessing.

What of the 14th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? In these verses we find that John saw the Savior as a reaper of the vintage of the earth, and three angels whom John saw as reapers also. This is in harmony with Matthew 13:39, 41, 49, in which scriptures angels are spoken of as reapers. The word “fire” in the 18th verse, and the expression, “winepress of the wrath of God,” together suggest God's severe judgments that will be inflicted on the wicked in the end of the Gospel Age. The last verse of this chapter is but the description of the finishing touch of the picture, of which we have an illustration in Isaiah 5:5, 6. The winepress is here represented as trodden by horses, and that the blood of those trodden upon will be so deep, or will rise so high, that it will “come unto the horse bridles.” All this is here set forth in this picture to indicate the extent, and severity, and terribleness of the divine judgments, as they will be finally inflicted on the wicked at the end of the divine favor as offered in the Gospel Age. The winepress as here described is a sign to indicate the fulness and severity of the final judgments. The meaning is, that as such treatment of grapes demolishes them so the divine judgments will demolish those on whom they will fall. This is indicated also by the words, “grind him to powder,” in Matthew 21:44.

CHAPTER XV

What is here revealed? In this chapter John reveals to us “another sign * * great and marvelous,” which he saw in heaven,—“seven angels, having the seven last plagues” in which “is filled up the wrath of God.” Next he reveals that he saw “as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire,” and saw those certain ones standing on that “sea of glass, having harps of God,” and that they sang a song of Moses and the Lamb, and, likewise, he reveals to us that which they said. To this he adds that he next beheld that “the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened,” and that he saw the seven angels who will inflict the seven last plagues, and that “vials full of the wrath of God” were given to them. In the end of the chapter we

find a statement concerning the glory of God, and of the fulfilling of the mentioned plagues. The revelations recorded in this chapter are a continuation of that which John beheld between his vision of the rising and falling of Rome—pagan Rome and papal Rome. The government of pagan, or heathen, Rome ended in the latter part of the 5th Century, but that of papal, or popish, Rome continued and still continues, as a religious organization, and will continue till the end of the Gospel Age. Up to the date of this writing, A. D. 1915, much of papal Rome's temporal power has been taken from her. All that she now holds is yet to be taken from her. See chapter 17:12-17. When the end of the Gospel Age will come she will be simply a religious organization, or ecclesiasticism, yet will have great power.

What is the force of the expression, “as it were, “ in the 2nd verse? It means “in appearance.” John saw that which in appearance was as “a sea of glass mingled with fire.

What may we say to those who, on the basis of that which is stated in the last of this 2nd verse about “harps of God,” insist on having musical instruments in their religious worship? We may say to them that they might as well insist on standing oil that which in appearance is as “a sea of glass mingled with fire” while they use those instruments. Besides, we may say to them that those who will use those harps will have “gotten the victory over the beast,” while those who contend that they should have such instruments show, by such contention, that they are under the influence of the beast, or, at least, under the influence of THE vile woman who rides on the beast. The Romish church is the only church mentioned in the New Testament that has musical instruments in its use. See chapter 18:22.

What of the “smoke” which filled the temple of God? When God appeared to Isaiah in a vision just before sending him against Judah and Jerusalem, “the house was filled with smoke.” See Isaiah 6:1-4. Besides when God descended on Mount Sinai it “was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire.” See Exodus 19:18. In view of such testimony in the Old Testament we should not think strange that God's glory was manifested to the Apostle John in connection with “smoke,” especially when we consider that “our God is a consuming fire.” (Hebrews 12:29.)

CHAPTER XVI

What does the Apostle John reveal to us in this chapter? The revelation which he here offers to us is, first, concerning the voice which he heard commanding the seven angels, to whom were given the vials of the seven last plagues, to go, and “pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.” Then he reveals to us an account of the pouring out of each of the seven vials, and of the inflictions that followed. As a preparation for appreciating that which is here recorded concerning the seven last plagues the reader's mind should be refreshed by considering the ten plagues that were inflicted on the Egyptians, and their land. See Exodus, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th chapters. The reader should consider also 2 Samuel 24:16, with 2 Kings 19:35. In course of the Jewish Age God sent angels to inflict his judgments.

What is “signified,” or indicated, in the 2nd verse of the chapter now before us? The indication here is that the first angel whom God will send forth with a vial of his wrath will begin to inflict the divine judgments on the Romanists. What this word “sore” in this verse means we may understand by reading Exodus 9:8-12. The Greek word here translated by the word “sore” means, first, “a wound” and then “an ulcer, sore.” In view of this we learn that God will begin his judgments on Romanists, by afflicting them with sores or ulcers of some kind. And what of the second vial of wrath? It will be poured on the sea, and the waters of the sea will become “as the blood of a dead man.” As a result every living thing in the sea will die.

What of the third vial of wrath? It will be poured out upon “the rivers and fountains of waters,” and they will become “blood.” What is meant by all this the reader may learn by again considering Exodus 7:17-21. The plagues that were brought upon Egypt were real, and the plagues that are threatened for the end of the Gospel Age will be real, as far as we are informed.

What of the fourth vial of wrath? It will be “poured out * * upon the sun, “ and power will be given unto the sun “to scorch men with fire.” But we are here informed that those who will be scorched will not repent. When the heathen will be afflicted they will not repent (chapter 9:20,21), and neither will the Romanists repent when they will be afflicted by the divine judgments.

What is “signified,” or revealed, in regard to the pouring

out of the fifth vial of God's wrath? It will be “poured out upon the seat of the beast, and then his kingdom will be “full of darkness,” and the people of that kingdom will gnaw their “tongues for pain,” or on account of pain. Moreover, they will blaspheme “the God of heaven because of their pains, and their sores,” for they will not repent of their deeds.

What of the sixth vial? It will be “poured out upon the great river Euphrates” and then the waters of that river will be “dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” In chapter 9:13,14 we learn that when John, in his vision, heard the sixth trumpet sounded reference was made to “the great river Euphrates.” And, now, we learn that when he saw the sixth vial of wrath poured out something was accomplished with reference to that river. Ancient Babylon was built on the banks of that river. Its channel was changed by the army of the Median king, Darius, just before the city fell under his control, and its waters will be “dried up” just before mystic Babylon will be utterly overthrown. The country of the Medes lies east of Babylon, and, in view of this, the Bible reader can see the appropriateness of the reference here made to “the kings of the east.” The way is to be “prepared” for them to come to the battle mentioned in the 16th verse.

What of the 13th and 14th verses? The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet are here represented as one, or, at least, as united, so that when certain unclean spirits came from one of the three beings just mentioned they came from all. Or, we may suppose that one of those spirits came from each of the three beings here mentioned. If this is the idea, then those three beings—the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet—are all of the same purpose. Besides, they are mediums for evil spirits, or “spirits of devils, working miracles,” and their business will be to “go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” When the Lord desired to encourage the wicked Ahab to go forth to battle against the Syrians he sent forth “a lying spirit” into the mouth of Ahab's prophets. See 1 Kings 22:19-23. And God will desire to bring the nations, that will be “angry” when “he will take unto himself his great power” (chapter 11:17, IS), together unto the battle of Armageddon. Then he will suffer three unclean spirits to go forth and deceive them. This will be in the close of the Gospel Age, and then, at the close of the Millennial Age, the Lord

will release the devil himself from the bottomless pit, and he will “go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth * * to gather them together to battle.”

What is the meaning of the word “Armageddon”? It means “hill of Megiddo,” and the word “Megiddo” means “crowded.” In view of this the word “Armageddon” has in it the idea of a great host, or crowded company. Thus the name of that place indicates the crowded condition of the host that will be gathered when the great battle will be fought between Christ and the “angry” nations who will refuse to submit peaceably to his reign.

What is “signified” by the record here given of the pouring out of the vial of the seventh angel? The declaration, “It is done,” as recorded in the last of the 17th verse, indicates the conclusion. The expression, “great city,” as used in the 19th verse, refers to mystic Babylon, or the city of Rome. See chapter 14:8. That city will then be divided into three parts, but, whether geographically or socially or spiritually divided, we are not informed, and should not speculate. The cities of the “angry” nations (chapter 11:18) will then fall, and when everything else will have been accomplished then the city of Rome will be finally and forever overthrown. This is implied in the declaration, “And great Babylon came in remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” The statements recorded in the 20th and 21st verses concerning “every island,” “the mountains” and the “great hail,” all indicate that nature will be disturbed when Rome will be overthrown. The 18th verse has a bearing in the same direction. There was an earthquake and a rending of rocks when the Savior died (Matthew 27:51), and there will very appropriately be an earthquake, also a moving of “islands” and of “mountains,” and a falling of “great hail” when Christ will take vengeance on the “angry” nations, including “that great city,” the city of Rome.

CHAPTER XVII

What may we conclude was “signified” to the Apostle John in his vision as here recorded? It is concerning mystic Babylon, the Roman Catholic power, and God's purpose against her. She is here represented as a lewd woman sitting on “a scarlet colored beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” “The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth,” or seven hills on which the city of Rome, in Italy, is built. That city is

the seat of the Roman Catholic power. The “ten horns” are . represented as “ten kings” that had not arisen when John saw his vision; but would arise, and, for a time, would “give their power and strength unto the beast,” and would oppose Christ. But Christ would overcome them and would cause them to turn against the “whore.”

What may we say of the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? In the 19th verse of the preceding chapter we learn that as Christ will be engaged in subjugating the “angry” nations, when he shall take unto himself his “great power,” then “great Babylon” will come “in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” And in the beginning of the chapter now before us we learn that attention will then be given to her to the exclusion of all others. According to the 8th and 9th chapters of this book, Heathenism, the oldest rebellion against God, will first receive special attention. According to the 11th chapter, Judaism, the second rebellion in respect to antiquity, will next receive special attention. And in the chapter now under consideration, with the chapter following it, we learn that Roman Catholicism, the last great rebellion against God, will receive special attention.

What is the force of the expression “many waters,” as recorded in the last of the 1st verse? That expression is explained in the 15th verse to mean “peoples, and multitudes and nations, and tongues.” In other words, the prophecy is that the Roman Catholic church, as John saw her, would sit upon many nations. This she has actually done.

What is the bearing of the 2nd verse? We may learn by considering the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter, also by considering that certain presidents of the United States of America have sent to the pope of Rome various documents and messages, expressing their high regard for him. They have been overcome by her magnificence and display of power, and, in that sense, have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. Their ignorance of the Bible has prepared them to be overawed by her shows and shams, her pomp and splendor, in outward appearance. As a result, they have rendered distant homage to her, and have, thereby, made a bid for the votes of her communicants in the United States. But outward show is not all that Rome uses to accomplish her ends. All devices are adopted by her, even the social dance, and gambling. But that which is most successful in her appeals to the masses is her doctrine of death-bed repentance. With that doctrine she be

numbs the moral sensibilities of all who accept it, and, in that sense, makes them drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Is any significance found in the color of the beast that John saw? Yes, Rome delights in red. Then, as recorded in the 4th verse the woman that John saw “was arrayed in purple and scarlet color.” Besides, she was “decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hands.” All this is verified in Rome's gilded appearance.

But what of the name “written” on her forehead? That name, as here given, is an index to Rome's appearance. Her priests have their collars as bands in front, and they fasten at the back of the neck. Their coats and vests are buttoned up to the throat. This means secretiveness, and, hence “mystery.” The same is true of the long bonnets of the so-called “sisters” in that church when they appear in public. The beads, the keys, and representation of the cross, are all on the same order. The high walls, or fences, around their schools and convents, together with all else pertaining to them, including their peculiar garb, testify to the appropriateness of the name “Mystery,” as John saw it on the forehead of the woman that he beheld sitting on the “scarlet colored beast.” The word “Babylon” means confusion, and, therefore, the beginning of the name of the lewd woman that John saw means “Mystery, Confusion The Great.” Paul wrote of the pope as “the man of sin,” and “the son of perdition. “ In stating that which is here designated “mystery” Paul wrote of it as “the mystery of iniquity.” See 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8.

But what of the latter part of that name? Rome is spiritually “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,” for she is the mother of religious sectarian systems in the Gospel Age. She was the offspring of technical, and sectarian, reasoning, and when her doctrines were formulated into a system she had set the example for others to do the same. That example has been followed by the Protestant reformers, generally, for with few exceptions they have formulated creeds, confessions of faith, disciplines, or books of covenants. In all these respects they have shown themselves daughters of the Roman Catholic church. Besides, they have ventured to adopt names and items of doctrine not authorized by the New Testament. In so doing they have nursed at the

breast of the old mother, designated in this chapter “The Mother Of Harlots and Abominations Of The Earth.” The forced celibacy, or forced unmarried condition, of her so-called saints, including her priesthood, has resulted in fleshly sodomy, and in fleshly fornications, which have always been abominable to God, and “abominations of the earth.” Moreover , the religious sectarianism of Rome and Protestant sects, as manifested by their unwillingness to learn the word of God, beyond the domain of their creeds, is the chief abomination found in Rome and in her daughters. This is the sin which made Capernaum worse than Sodom, and the Jewish leaders worse than the Ninevites. See Matthew 11:23,24, and Luke 11:32. In this sin Protestant sectarians and Romish sectarians are very much alike. They illustrate Proverbs 15:10 and John 3:20. Sectarianism in all domains of thought is abominable, but that which prevents mankind from being willing to learn the truth of God as taught in the Bible, if it is not set forth in their sectarian creeds, is the most abominable of all. But that by which most of the grades and shades, forms and phases, of sectarians, may be known, beyond question, is the spirit of persecution which they manifest. The “great red dragon,” that “old serpent, called the Devil and Satan,” is the persecuting spirit in Rome, and in all her daughters. This includes that sectarian body which has been guilty of persecuting the New Testament disciples by sometimes robbing them of their houses of worship, also by designating them “fogies,” “old fogies,” “moss-backs,” “back numbers antis,” “anti-every thing,” and by various other unhandsome names. Besides, they have tried to rob us of meeting houses which they could not get. In all these respects that body has shown itself a veritable daughter of Rome. The only reason why that body, and certain others of Protestantism, have not been “drunken with the blood of the saints” has been their fear of the civil law; that is, if we may judge them by their words and certain conduct of which they have been guilty. One of the reformers, the father of a certain sect which has branched into many sects, was guilty of signing the death sentence of a man named Servetus, who was supposed to be a heretic. Other reformers and their followers have, quite generally, shown a similar disposition, but never manifested it to the extent of actual murder. But Rome, as the 6th verse of this chapter represents her, has made herself “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” Pagan Rome began this, and pa-

pal Rome continued it. The devil, as an accuser and persecutor, has in all phases of Rome been the inspiring spirit of persecution.

What may we say of the revelation mentioned in the 7th verse of this chapter, and onward to its close? In the 7th verse John begins to give an account of that which the angel said to him in describing the lewd woman, and of the beast that he saw carrying her. What is meant by the words 4 'was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition,' as recorded in the 8th verse? Pagan Rome "was," but at the time that John wrote had commenced to change, and continued till in the 4th Century it became Christian Rome, and after that became papal Rome. The word "perdition," as here recorded, suggests "son of perdition," of whom we read in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. When the word "beast" is used the civil government is referred to; when the word "man," or its equivalent, is used the pope is referred to; when the word "woman," or its equivalent, is used the Romish church is referred to. John sometimes used one of these words and sometimes another, in regard to that which he saw and heard in regard to Romanism in all its phases.

What of the 10th verse? In it we have an index to that which secular history, in some measure, verifies. There had been several kings, or emperors, in pagan Rome, when John wrote, and there was one at the time that he wrote. After him another was to come, and then several others. Then the change from pagan Rome to Christian Rome would be more fully manifest. Having indicated this much John wrote in the 11th verse that the period of secular rule, or government, "that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven." Thus the 8th period of rulership, in Rome was to be the outgrowth of the 7th, and this was true of the papal rulership. The outward transition from pagan Rome to Christian Rome occurred when Constantine professed to be a Christian. In his day the Church was so favored that it became corrupt very rapidly. Historians inform us that costly church edifices were erected, and the Church became popular. This was the broad way and down grade to popery, and thus to the "eighth" period, which still exists, in its religious power, also its wish for secular power, and is destined for "perdition." The reader can verify much of this by examining the best of church histories.

What may we say of the "ten kings" here mentioned? In this part of his vision John was told of ten kingdoms which

would arise and help Romanism to persecute the true followers of Christ, but would be overcome, and then turn against Romanism. Those kingdoms have arisen in Europe, and, for a time, did serve the Romish church, but, one by one, most of them have turned against her, until near or about all have taken from her the reins of civil government, and are disposed to reject her pretensions. France has furnished a recent illustration of this, likewise Portugal, and Spain will do the same, in separating church and state. But the Romish church, as a religious institution and power, will remain till Christ will bring upon her the actual overthrow, of which an account is offered to us in the next chapter.

What of the “names of blasphemy,” mentioned in the 3rd verse of this chapter? The pope is spoken of in Romish literature as the “Sovereign Pontiff,” “Vicar of Christ,” “Head of the Church,” “Holy Father His Holiness,” “His Beatitude Lord God the Pope. “ These are not all the names by which the pope is designated, but they are sufficient for us to understand what was “signified” by the “names of blasphemy” which John saw. The pope is the head of the church which was signified to John by a lewd woman that sat on “a scarlet colored beast,” full of the “names of blasphemy.” All that is true of the titles of the pope is true of the pompous titles of all other orders, such as “Grand,” “Noble Grand,” “Master,” “High Priest,” “Grand, Master,” “Sovereign Grand,” or any others of that kind. Such names are all presumptuous, and are closely related to the blasphemous names of “the man of sin.” Roman Catholicism is a symbolic religion of human invention. The same is true of several other religio-secular societies. Romanism is the chief of such societies, and, besides being a symbolic religion, is a persecuting power against all who oppose her doctrines. The same is true of all other societies that have a symbolic religion, even if they be chiefly secular. They do not come to the light, that their deeds may be known. But, with one accord, they hate all who bring their names, erroneous doctrines and evil deeds, to the light of God's word.

CHAPTER XVIII

Of what are we informed in this part of the revelation made by the Apostle John? We are informed in this chapter of the actual overthrow of mystic Babylon, whose seat of government from her beginning has been in the seven-hilled

city on the river Tiber, and from her beginning has been called "Rome." We are informed, likewise, of the lamentations, in regard to her overthrow, which will be expressed by many, also of the fact that many will be called on to rejoice by reason of her overthrow. In the conclusion of this chapter the suddenness and completeness of Rome's overthrow is signified.

What may we say of the description here given of the overthrow of mystic Babylon? It suggests that which certain ancient prophets wrote concerning the overthrow of ancient Babylon, situated on the river Euphrates. See Isaiah 13:19-22, 47:1-15, also Jeremiah 50th and 51st chapters. The overthrow of ancient Babylon was real and sudden and terrible, and it continues; the overthrow of modern Babylon will be the same. When the great city of ancient Babylon fell into the hands of the Medes and Persians the entire empire fell with it. On the same principle, when the great city of modern Babylon will fall the entire priesthood, and all the edifices she has erected, will fall with her. The declaration in the 8th verse, "She shall be utterly burned with fire," is a clear index to the means that will be used against her. This is a plain statement, and God knows how to kindle that fire.

But will Protestant sects be involved in Rome's overthrow by reason of their imitation of her? They have imitated her in the adoption of human societies, man-made schemes to raise money for religious purposes, in their use of instrumental music in worship, their adoption of humanly formed religious creeds, and their manifestation of the persecuting spirit. Yet we are not informed by the Sacred Text whether they will be involved in Rome's sins, except as in indicated in 2 John 11th verse. Those sects have certainly bidden Rome "Godspeed", or good progress, in that they have endorsed many of her errors. Mohammedanism, Greek Catholicism, and Protestant sectarianism, do not appear in the judgments of the end of the Gospel Age. Before the end of this age shall come those institutions may all be blotted out, or be so changed that they were not regarded as worthy of a place in John's vision. But Heathenism, Judaism and Roman Catholicism will not change, and, therefore, they have their place in this vision,.

What then is the bearing of the invitation recorded in the 4th verse? First of all, the bearing is like that of Matthew 24:15-18, in which scriptures we learn that the disciples were commanded to leave Jerusalem when the time of her

destruction would be evident. This means that if any of Christ's disciples will be in Rome when the time will come for her, as a city, to be overthrown, they should "come out of her." Then, as it respects Rome's doctrines and practices, God's people are certainly called upon to "come out" from among them. This call has a direct bearing on all who are connected with sectarian bodies, who have been converted to Christ in mind and heart and life. Some of that class are in all sectarian bodies, and, perhaps, even among Roman Catholics. They were not all Israel who were of Israel (Romans 9:6), and they are not all sectarians who are members of sectarian bodies. But we should not regard them as Christians while they have not obeyed the Gospel fully, nor even while they consent to wear sectarian names. Yet the Lord knows who among them are honest, and who love him more than they do sectarianism. Therefore he knows who of them will come out of sectism if they will be given opportunity. He "callesh those things which be not as though they were." (Romans 4:17.) In view of this Christ spoke of Gentiles as "other sheep" even before any of them had heard his gospel. (John 10:16.) Christ's speech to Paul, as recorded in Acts 18:9, 10, was on the same principle. Therefore, the exhortation, "Come out of her, my people," may simply refer to those who have the disposition to be of his people.

What of the last part of the 7th verse? It suggests the self-confidence of ancient Babylon, as referred to in Isaiah 47:7. Babylon in Chaldea congratulated herself with the thought that she would be "a lady forever," and Babylon in Italy has said in her heart that she should "see no sorrow." But already her sorrow has begun, by one government after another separating the power of the state from that of the church. Such sorrow is only the beginning of that which she shall suffer. Because of that which she has done and said, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. "

What of the 9th verse, and onward to the end of the 19th? In those verses we find a description of the earthly lamentations that will be made over Roman Catholicism when she will be utterly overthrown., In connection with those lamentations we find mention made of the earthward reasons for them. The Roman Catholic church is a favorite with merchants because she is extensive and varied in her purchases of their wares. Hence, when she will be utterly over

thrown they will lament. Her pictures, her images, her altars., her meeting houses of all grades, are always as costly as she can venture to build, even by oppressing the poor, and appealing to the world with worldly devices. The lamentation of the merchants, as mentioned in this chapter, are suggestive of the uproar stirred by a certain silversmith Of whom we read in Acts 19th chapter.

And what may we say of the 20th verse, and onward to the end of the chapter? The fact that these “apostles and prophets” are commanded to rejoice over the fall of Rome, because God will have avenged them “on her,” indicates that the “beast” has remained the same from pagan Rome to papal Rome, for pagan Rome was the one that killed the Apostles. Yes, and the persecuting spirit of the “great red dragon” killed all the Old Testament prophets who were slain. Then, on the principle mentioned in Matthew 23:35, God will avenge the blood of all martyrs on Rome, because she was guilty of persecuting Christians even unto death, regardless of the history of persecution which was offered to her in God's word. This was the reason that the Jews have suffered so terribly. They were guilty of persecuting Christ, regardless of the evil history of the persecutions inflicted upon the ancient prophets. And their sufferings are not yet ended. The last verse of this chapter confirms this conclusion in regard to the guilt of persecutors. The intenseness of their guilt is in proportion to their opportunities for light and knowledge concerning the sin of persecuting people on account of their religion. The Savior said to the Jews, whom he arraigned for their disobedience and hypocrisy, that upon them should “come all the righteous blood” which had been shed upon the earth, “from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias.” (Matthew 23:35.) The reason was that in becoming religious persecutors they scorned the evil history of religious persecutions. On the same principle as previously indicated, Roman Catholics will be held to a most terrible responsibility because they have, and will have, scorned such history even more than did the Jews.

CHAPTER XIX

Of what does John inform us in this chapter of his revelation? He informs us of the rejoicing that he heard in heaven over the judgment inflicted upon the Romish church. He informs us next of rejoicing in heaven because “the Lord God omnipotent reigneth” , and then concerning “the mar-

riage of the Lamb,” the raiment of the bride, and the blessedness of those invited to the marriage. Then we read of an interview between John and the angel who showed him these things, in regard to worship. To this is added an account of that which John saw and heard of him who shall rule with a rod of iron, and whose name is “the Word of God,” also “King of kings and Lord of lords.” Near the end of this chapter we find a call to “all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven” to gather themselves together “unto the supper of the great God,” and this is followed by a description of the kind of supper it will be. The final destiny of the beast and the false prophet is then stated, also the final slaughter of all who should be slain.

What may we learn by considering the revelation here made concerning the marriage of the Lamb? We may learn that when all those who will be redeemed in the Gospel Age will have accepted the gospel, and been purified by it, then the bride will have “made herself ready,” and then Christ will take unto himself the Church in its completeness. Then will be fulfilled the promise in John 14:3, also in 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17. Then, and not till then, will all the redeemed be gathered together. In Romans 7:4 mention is made of the union of individual believers with Christ so that they may “bring forth fruit unto God” in this world. But the reception of the entire company of true believers, collectively, by the Lord Jesus Christ, will not take place till the end of the Gospel Age, as mentioned in this chapter.

What is the bearing of the statement that “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”? Its bearing is that God's purpose concerning Jesus pervades all the prophecy that God has given to man. Had it not been for that purpose God would not have given any prophecy, nor any other revelation to man. No. He would not even have created man. In this chapter we find that the names “Jesus” and “Faithful and True” and “The Word of God” and “King of kings and Lord of lords” are all applied to Christ. His name, “The Word of God,” in the light of John 1:1-14, implies that Jesus belongs to all time, and even to eternity.

What of the revelation made in the 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th verses? Those verses reveal a preparation for war which is indicated in its fullness in the 15th verse, and onward to the close of this chapter. John says of Christ, “In righteousness he doth judge and make war,” likewise that “out, of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations.” Does this imply that the nations will

not have any severe judgments brought upon them? No. In Jeremiah 1:10 we learn that he had been set “over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build and plant.” Then the later history of those nations shows that all that was accomplished when all of God's words to Jeremiah were fulfilled. Thus it will be in the end of the Gospel Age. Jesus will come again, will gather his people to himself, and will overthrow all who will then be in opposition to him. The destructive power will be the Divine word, which is spoken of as “the sword * * * which proceeded out of his mouth.” But when that Word is put into execution it may be like the Divine judgment against the army of a certain Assyrian monarch of whom we read in 2 Kings 19:32-35. In view of that method of dealing out his judgments to those who opposed him, God said of his ancient people when they had sinned and would not repent, “Therefore I have hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth. “

What of the 20th verse of this chapter? The “beast” here mentioned refers to the governments on which the lewd woman had ridden, and the “false prophet” refers to all those who helped Rome in her pretensions to be able to work miracles. See chapter 16:13, 14, also 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12. Some, if not all, of Rome's priests, in some instances, pretend to be able to curse those who differ from them, by inflicting some great evil. All of them pretend that they can change bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ. In these respects they are workers of “lying wonders,” and thus are false prophets, as well as by their false teaching in other particulars.

What is “signified” by the invitation given to the fowls, as mentioned in the 17th verse? The destruction of Roman Catholics is “signified.” In view of all that is set forth in several preceding chapters concerning Rome, we are impelled to this conclusion. It means this, and cannot mean anything else, in view of the preceding prophecies concerning Rome.

CHAPTER XX

What is here revealed for us to consider? In this chapter the Apostle John offers to us that part of his vision which he saw in regard to the binding of Satan, the first resurrection, the Millennial Age, the loosing of Satan, the army that he will gather together against the saints, the final overthrow of Satan and of his army. John reveals also that he saw

“a great white throne,” and that “the earth and the heaven fled away” from the face of him that sat on it, also that the final judgment was set, the books were opened, and that the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. He reveals, likewise, that death and hell, or hades—the unseen world—were cast into the lake of fire.

Will Satan be literally bound, and cast into the bottomless pit, and held there a thousand years? Certainly. The Divine Record so declares. Thus it is written, and thus it remains, unchanged and unchangeable. What else could such declarations mean? The Divine Record is as clear concerning a personal devil, as it is concerning a personal God, and we should accept that which it states concerning both of those beings, without gainsaying or speculating. But may not the time come when he will be bound by the truth? All history, as found in the Bible, is against such a conclusion. Besides, this entire book is against it. We cannot bind mankind by the truth, except in a few instances; and how then can we bind the father of lies? We should take the chapter before us literally, except to consider that its language may be somewhat accommodative. The words “key” and “chain”, in the 1st verse, for instance, may be accommodative, even as the word “seal”, in the 3rd verse, may be accommodative. When God will send an angel to put Satan into the bottomless pit, to remain a thousand years, he will not need a “key” nor a “chain” nor a “seal,” as far as we can judge, any more than he will need a club. But these words pertain to the picture, and in this book God offers to us his truth, concerning the last times, in pictures. It is the concrete style of rhetoric, and not the abstract style of logic. In Logic every Truth is presented in plain and direct speech, but in rhetoric imagery and illustrations, of all kinds, are used to present truth.

What is the revelation of the 4th verse? The 4th, 5th and 6th verses need to be considered together. The martyrs, and all others who will not have worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands, will live and reign with Christ a thousand years before the rest of the dead will be raised from the dead. In other words, Christ will come again to gather all who will have been redeemed in the Gospel Age, with all redeemed ones of the Jewish and Patriarchal ages. Those of former ages who are among the saved will be brought forth from the dead, as of the dead in Christ, for they believed in God, and obeyed commands which referred

to Christ. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 we read with reference to all the faithful.

What may we say to those who contend that only the martyrs will have part in the first resurrection? We may say, in the words of Christ to certain Sadducees, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” The 4th verse indicates that a great many others will have part in that resurrection, and when the description there given of those others is considered, in all its bearings, it will be found to embrace all who have not worshiped idols, nor bowed down to the religious commands of men. Besides, the last part of 1 Corinthians 15:23 implies that all the redeemed will have part in the first resurrection, for all the redeemed will be Christ's at his coming. He died “for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament.” See Hebrews 9:15. The first part of the 5th verse of the chapter now under consideration is to the same effect. “The rest of the dead” is an expression which, in this connection, must refer to the disobedient dead. A plain statement of the revelation here set forth is this: The present order of things will continue till all the kingdoms of the earth will be brought under Divine control, by manifestation of Divine power, as indicated in the preceding parts of this book. Besides, this order of things will continue till all those will be slain who will have received “the mark of the beast,” or will have “worshiped his image,” and till all who can be redeemed, in the Gospel Age, will have been saved. Then the devil will be bound for a thousand years, and Christ will come, and the promise of the first resurrection will then be fulfilled. Those who will then be raised will be taken up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and shall be forever with the Lord. Because they were faithful to God in opposition to the world and the flesh, even with the devil to tempt them through his agents, they will be raised before the Millennial Age will be introduced.

But what of the Millennial that is here mentioned? The word “millennium” is composed of two Latin words, which together mean—a thousand years. That God intends to introduce such a period is as plainly stated in this chapter as that he intended to bring a flood of waters on the earth is set forth in Genesis 6th chapter. Mankind will live on the earth then, even as they are now living, except that they will not be tempted by the devil. The worst enemy they will then have will be their human natures. Does some one inquire where the people will come from who will be

on the earth during the Millennium? That is not our side of the question. Though God will take the righteous away, and destroy those who will have worshiped the beast, or received his mark, yet we need not be in doubt. God knew how to overthrow Pharaoh and his big army, yet spare a residue of the Egyptians who were not responsible for his sins. He knew how to overthrow the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness, yet save three millions, or more, to enter the land of Canaan. He knew how to destroy Jerusalem, and the Jews as a nation, and yet save a remnant of that people. On the same principle, we may feel assured that he will know how to overthrow all his enemies among mankind in the last days of the Gospel Age, and, yet, will be able to save sufficient of mankind to people the world in the Millennial Age. Besides, from the time of the event mentioned in chapter 11:13, God will have the Jews as his people, for the promise in Isaiah 66:22 cannot fail. In view of all this we need not be disturbed about God's side of this question, nor of any other. He knows how to manage it, and will manage it to his honor and glory. All that we need to do is to believe and obey the Lord in the present, then believe and trust him with reference to the future.

But will people then live on the earth as they do now, and how long will they live, and will everybody be righteous then? In the 8th and 9th verses we learn that when the time will come for the devil to be released from his "prison" he will find multitudes ready to listen to him, and to be marshaled in his army. This settles the question in regard to the righteousness of some who will live in the end of the Millennial Age. How long they will live in that age, as well as the two kinds of characters that will then be cultivated, is implied in Isaiah 65:20. But all this pertains to the Divine side of this great question, and our business does not extend that far.

What is the bearing of the expression "day and night" in the last part of the 10th verse? It is accommodative, and means continually. Day will never come in the bottomless pit, even as night will never come in heaven.

Who will be the "Gog and Magog" mentioned in the 8th verse? In Ezekiel 38th chapter, especially in the 10th, 11th and 12th verses, we learn concerning "Gog and Magog." The "evil thought" which they would think corresponds with that mentioned in the 9th verse of this chapter. The thought of going up against God's people because they

were supposed to be unprotected, was “an evil thought” in ancient “Gog and Magog,” and it will be the thought that the devil will suggest to his hosts at the time of the last battle.

What of the 13th and 14th verses? Death and hades, or death and the unseen world, will give up all the souls of dead persons which then will be in them. The word “death” here refers to the death of the body, while the word “hades,” or “hell” in certain translations, refers to the domain of departed spirits, between the time of the death of the body and the resurrection thereof. Then death and the unseen world will be cast into the lake of fire, which will be the end of the death of the body. Then will be fulfilled the saying that is written, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” (1 Corinthians 15:26.)

What may we say of those who teach that the first resurrection mentioned in the first part of this chapter means a “standing up of the souls of men,” and not a resurrection of the body in any sense? We may say of them that they might as well deny the resurrection of the body entirely. For, if “the first resurrection,” as here mentioned, does not refer to the resurrection of the body, then the expression “the rest of the dead lived not again” does not refer to that kind of a resurrection. As a result, the bodies of neither the righteous nor of the wicked will be raised, and the doctrine of the resurrection of the body is wholly denied. Besides, whoever teaches that “the first resurrection,” mentioned in this chapter, or any other, refers to “the standing up of the souls of men,” as in the reformation of the 16th Century, is certainly in confusion concerning John's vision. Those who teach such a doctrine should be classed with Hymeneus and Philetus, who were guilty of “profane and vain babblings.” See 2 Timothy 2:16-18. They are speculators, and do not speak as the oracles of God on this subject. The same is true of those who say that the first resurrection here mentioned takes place in baptism. They fail to consider that the expression “first resurrection” is here placed in opposition to the statement that “the rest of the dead lived not again.”

CHAPTER XXI

And what is revealed for our learning in this part of John's vision? That he saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” and “the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven,” is first revealed, Then that he heard “a

voice from heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men,” is next revealed, also a statement of the blessedness of those who will then be God's people is revealed. This is followed by a statement of the terrible destiny of those who will not then be numbered with God's people. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to mention of the Church, as “the bride, the Lamb's wife,” and a description of her eternal home, which will be “the holy Jerusalem” which shall descend “out of heaven from God. “

What may we say of the new heaven and the new earth mentioned in this chapter? In 1 Peter 4:11 we are informed that we should “speak as the oracles of God.” In those oracles we find various prophecies concerning the “new heaven and earth” (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13), and they are all clear concerning the divine purposes on this subject. The chapter now under consideration offers to us a statement of the fulfillment of those purposes, and adds a description of the “new Jerusalem,” the final habitation of the redeemed.

What may we say to those who have concluded that the new Jerusalem here mentioned is the Church, and thus the description here given of a beautiful city should only be considered as a picture of the spiritual glory of the Church? In response we may say that the last four verses of this chapter indicate that such a conclusion is erroneous. The Church consists of “them who are saved,” and the saved ones “shall walk in the light of it”; that is, in the light of the city. Thus the Church and the city are spoken of as different, and the former is spoken of as walking “in the light” of the latter. Thus in showing to John “the bride the Lamb's wife,” the angel showed to him the Church, and the city also which will be her habitation.

What may we say of the dimensions of that city? According to our method of measuring it will be very large, and suggests plenty of room. See John 14:2,3. The new Jerusalem is the place which Christ has gone to prepare for his people. In regard to size it is beyond comparison with any earthly city, or with all of them combined, likewise in regard to beauty and glory. Eight furlongs make a mile, and thus eight thousand furlongs would make a thousand miles, while four thousand more would make five hundred miles. Therefore, the twelve thousand furlongs mentioned in the 16th verse would make fifteen hundred miles, and if that many miles should be divided into the length,

breadth, and height, of the city, then its extent will be five hundred miles in each direction. A city five hundred miles long, and that many miles wide, would be beyond comparison with any city on earth. But for a city to be five hundred miles high indicates that its dimensions will be beyond the domain of reason, and that such height can only be admitted by the mind of man on the principle of faith. The same is true in regard to the wealth and beauty of this city as here described. In every respect this city is beyond the domain of reason, even as the idea of eternity, or endless duration, is beyond the imagination of mankind.

What is “the glory and honor of the nations,” mentioned in the 24th and 26th verses of this chapter? From the divine viewpoint, the glory and honor of all nations, in the sight of God, truly consist of the Christians that are in those nations, and this is “the glory and honor” which shall be brought into the new Jerusalem. From the human viewpoint the glory and honor of all nations is wealth, pomp, show, and these are but a sham before God, and will not be worthy of a place in the heavenly city, for “there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

Before passing from this chapter entirely we need to consider the strange doctrine, which certain men have taught, that the new heaven and earth here mentioned were intended to signify new political conditions on earth, accomplished among the nations by the Gospel, and by carnal wars which the light of the Gospel will inspire men to wage. That doctrine is erroneous, as will be seen by all who will consider aright the statements which are now offered. In Isaiah 65:17 we find this: “For behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” The word “create, “ in this scripture, is against the doctrine, that the “new heavens and a new earth” here mentioned were intended to be a result of believing the Gospel. That which is created is strictly a new something which did not previously exist. Then the statement, “and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind,” is against that doctrine. This statement cannot mean anything except that the former heavens and earth “shall not be remembered nor come into mind.” In 2 Peter 3rd chapter and in John's vision we learn that the first heaven and earth shall pass away before the new heaven and earth will be introduced. The Apostle John declares, “and there was no more sea.”

This shows that he did not refer to new political conditions in this earth, but to a "new earth," which should not be three-fourths or more covered with water, as this earth now is. The Apostle Peter's testimony is to the same effect in his 2nd letter and 3rd chapter, especially in the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th verses. All arguments based on changes which have been made, and are now going on, in political conditions should not be used to set aside plain words of the Sacred Text. Political changes are made in proportion as political evils work their own rebuke. But as soon as one evil is effectively rebuked another is introduced. For instance, before the Negro aristocracy of the southern part of the United States of America could be effectively rebuked a monied aristocracy in the north states began. Negro slavery was abolished, and, especially, in course of the war required to accomplish that end, the purpose to enslave both the white man and the Negro to the monied power was begun. Moreover, as the evil of drunkenness from strong drink declines the greater evil of drunkenness from opiates has increased.

Much has been said about the Puritans of New England, and their desire for religious liberty. But their history shows that they were superstitious sectarians of the most intense kind. They came to America to enjoy religious freedom, but became persecutors of those who differed from them in religion. The history of Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson will be sufficient to prove this charge. Not until religious persecution had worked its own rebuke was its severest form abolished even among the Puritans in New England. The same was true in regard to persecutions for witchcraft as late as 1692.

But since then the other extreme has been established in New England. From the extreme of death, or banishment, for religion's sake, the New Englanders have generally adopted a sort of culture which causes its victims to be almost destitute of religious convictions. With few exceptions the people of New England are not now possessed of strong convictions concerning the Bible nor any part of it. On the contrary, they say, "it seems," and "it appears," or "I think," and "don't you think?" Such and such-like expressions indicate the length, breadth, height, and depth of their ideas in regard to religion. In their estimation anything should be tolerated in religion except close adherence to the Gospel in its negative teaching. In New England the idea seems to prevail that a positive declaration that a religious person is or can be dangerously

wrong is bigotry. As a result, the conclusion is common that positive rebuke of a religious error is beneath the dignity of culture.

In view of all this, and especially of their persecuting spirit, the supposition of certain religious teachers, that the principle of religious freedom, or of separation of church and state, was brought to America by the Pilgrim fathers, is fanciful. They fled from the tyranny of religious opinion, and, then, to the extent of their power, they established the tyranny of religious opinion, and continued it till it worked its own rebuke. They were as intolerant, and as cruel, as their worst persecutors ever were. Whoever doubts this should read their history from 1620 to 1650, and then take it up again in 1692.

The impartial student of such history cannot avoid feelings of admiration for the Puritans because of their struggles and sufferings; nor can such students avoid feelings of contempt for their disposition to persecute unto death, or banishment, those who would not endorse their intolerant religious ideas. To Roger Williams whom they banished, and to Rhode Island, we must look for the origin of religious tolerance in America, and not to the Puritan fathers, nor to Massachusetts, nor to Cotton Mather and the superstitious people of Salem in 1692. Therefore any argument in favor of the conversion of mankind to Christ, or even in favor of better political conditions, based on the religious purposes of the Pilgrim fathers, however eloquent it may be, is fanciful in its foundation. Sectarianism is the same in all ages, and, except when hindered by divine providence, or civil law, it has ever been, it is, and will be, destined to work its own rebuke. This is first done by its intolerance, and then when a reaction takes place it will work its further rebuke by its irreverence, indifference, and common ungodliness, if not gross immorality.

CHAPTER XXII

What is here revealed of John's vision? We find here a continuance of his record of that which a certain angel made known to him, also that which John did with reference to that angel, and the rebuke he received for what he did. Next we find a record of that which the angel said to John with reference to "the sayings of the prophecy of this book," also with reference to the fixedness of every character at the time when Christ will come again, and that he will come quickly. We are next informed of the

blessedness of those that will have obeyed Christ so as to have right to the tree of life, and the bad character of those who will be outside of the city. The angel then declared plainly that he represented Jesus, and mentioned the relation of Jesus to David. The last invitation is then set forth, the last curse is then announced, and the last benediction is pronounced.

What may we say of the revelations made in the 1st and 2nd verses of this chapter? The Apostle Peter commands, “ If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. “ In this instance those oracles do not say “He showed me a pure river,” “as it were,” as they do in chapter 15:2, in regard to “a sea of glass.” The expression “as it were” is not found here, and therefore we are shut out from the idea of a mere appearance in this instance. Therefore, in speaking as the oracles of God, in this instance, we must conclude that John saw the picture of a real river, which came out of the real “throne of God and of the Lamb.” We must conclude, likewise, that, as there was a real tree of life in the garden of Eden, on which there was real fruit, so there will be a real tree of life in heaven, on which there will be real fruit. The fruits of that tree will be for the redeemed (verse 14), and, in the meantime its leaves are intended for “the healing of the nations.” Those leaves are now represented in this world by the leaves of the Bible, which would heal the nations if they would only make the proper use of them. The real arrangement which God purposed to establish in the heavens for man's salvation in the Gospel Age was represented in the Jewish Age by the real tabernacle as “a shadow.” That arrangement has two departments—one to convert sinners, and the other to perfect believers. The same is true of the tree of life. Its leaves are now represented by the leaves of the Bible, and those who make the proper use of these leaves will, finally and forever, be partakers of the fruit of that tree. Then it was the Jewish tabernacle. Those who made the proper use of the authorized worship connected with it, will be, finally and forever, partakers of the benefit of that arrangement for man's salvation by the Gospel to which it referred.

What of the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of this chapter? When the time will come that is mentioned in this chapter, then God's last curse will have been pronounced. “The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it;” that is, in the city which John had just described in the preceding chapter, and in the former part of this one. Then the redeemed

shall “serve him,” and they shall “see his face,” and his name shall be forever “in their foreheads.” In view of this, all those who wish to be numbered with the redeemed should begin to wear his name in this life. In the last of the 5th verse we learn that the redeemed “shall reign forever and ever.” This implies that the service they shall render will be that of “kings and priests.” See chapter 1-6.

What may we say of the word “shortly” in the 6th verse, and of the word “quickly” in the 7th verse? The things which John wrote in this book began to be done, even from a human viewpoint, “shortly” after he finished recording them. The “mystery of iniquity,” which developed into the apostasy, began to work at a previous date. See 2 Thessalonians 2:7. Then the promise that the Lord would come “quickly” should be considered in the light of 2 Peter 3: S. The Lord could justly promise to “come quickly,” and yet intend to defer his coming for two thousand years or more.

What may we learn by considering the interview recorded in the 8th and 9th verses concerning “worship”? It is in harmony with all else that is found in the Bible on that subject. In Acts 10:25,26 we find more on that subject. The Apostle Peter would not suffer himself to be worshiped; neither would the angel whom God chose to make known his purposes concerning the last days, to the Apostle John,

What is the bearing of that which the angel said to John concerning relationship? The bearing is that he, as an angel, was a fellow servant of John, in keeping the sayings of God. But may that angel not have been one of the Old Testament prophets—Enoch or Elijah? No. Men do not become angels, nor does God need to make angels, in the strict sense, out of men. As an earthly messenger a man may be spoken of as an angel, yet as a celestial, or heavenly, being a man is not an angel. Therefore, all that is said in the verse under consideration about the relationship of the angel to John should be regarded as referring to obedience to God, or the official character, and not to any earthward relationship.

What of the 11th verse? The angel that spoke to John here signified, in that verse, that the time will come when all change, for either better or worse, will be impossible. The bad will remain bad, eternally, and the good will remain good eternally. This verse is in opposition to the doctrine of annihilation, or blotting out, of the wicked. The wicked

will continue to be wicked, even as the righteous will continue to be righteous. But this will be impossible if they will be blotted out of all existence. In harmony with this unavoidable conclusion is the direct testimony of chapter 14:11, 19:3. The wicked judge themselves “unworthy of everlasting life” by their rejection of the light that God offers to them. See Acts 13:46. As they render that judgment throughout the responsible period of their life on earth, God's justice requires that he shall give to them, finally and forever, in harmony with that judgment. They render the decision, and he will pass the sentence accordingly. They act the part of a jury with reference to themselves, and he, as a judge, will pronounce the sentence upon them. They decide upon their guilt, and he will decide upon their punishment. Everlasting life is offered to them, and, in deciding that they are unworthy of it, they imply that they deserve everlasting punishment. That punishment will be in everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels—not for them, but for the devil and his angels. But if they will, of their own accord, imitate the devil and his angels, and then will persist in so doing throughout life, they will there by show that they prefer the example of the devil and his angels. When they will have done this, to the utmost, then God will give to them the destiny of the devil, and of his angels. See Matthew 25:41.

What of the 14th and 15th verses? In them is found sufficient assurance of blessedness, and sufficient assurance of wretchedness, to warn all who read them, against all indifference concerning the divine commandments. Mankind lost permission to eat of the tree of life. in the garden of Eden by disobedience to one of God's commandments, and they will regain permission to eat of the tree of life by obedience to “his commandments.” There was a real tree of life in the garden of Eden and there will be a real tree of life in heaven. Man lost his right to the former tree by disobedience, and he will regain his right to the latter tree by obedience. Those who will obey the divine commandments, and who will be entitled to the tree of life, will be blessed forever, and this should encourage all who are Christians to be faithful until death, and should lead all sinners, who read about it or hear about it, to become Christians. On the other hand, the wretchedness of those who will be excluded from the tree of life will be such as should prove sufficient warning to all who become acquainted with it, to turn promptly and

forever from all disobedience. The Greek word here translated by the word “dogs” may be translated “snarlers,” when applied to persons, for it refers to persons who have the disposition of dogs. Then all the other evil characters, who will be on the outside of the heavenly city, should be sufficient to warn all who are informed concerning them, against every phase of disobedience to God and Christ. The thought of being forever imprisoned with snarlers, or “dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie,” should be sufficiently repulsive to cause, at least, every decent man and woman to become a Christian, and live a Christian, so as to reach the Christian's home in heaven.

What may we say of the 16th verse? In it we find the assurance that Christ is the one from whom came the revelation found in this book, and it should be considered in connection with the 1st verse of this book. In that verse the declaration is recorded that God gave this revelation to Jesus Christ, and that he “sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John.” In other words, he sent and indicated it by signs to John, and John made a record of that which he saw and heard. That record was to be sent to the seven churches in Asia. Those churches suffered themselves to become corrupted and ceased to exist. But the record, as such, has been preserved, and the churches which now exist are required to consider it... Those are pronounced “blessed” who read, and hear, and keep the sayings which are recorded in it.

What is indicated in the 17th verse? The fact that the Holy Spirit and the Church give an invitation to mankind to come and take the word of God freely, is first indicated. Then the fact that he that hears of this word is authorized to invite others, is indicated. The next indication is that he that desires that word is invited to come to it, and partake of it. Finally, the invitation is given to all that are willing to do so to come and take the word of God freely. In this series of invitations, as indicated in this verse, we find that which may be justly designated as the universal commission of Christ. In it we learn that all who hear the word of God are authorized to invite mankind to come to it, as well as those who desire it, and are willing to partake of it. In view of this we may say that Christ gave four commissions. The first was to his Apostles in course of his personal ministry, and was intended only for the benefit of the Jews. See Matthew 10:1-6; Luke 10:1-11. The second was given to Christ's Apostles just before he as-

cended to heaven, and was intended for all mankind, for the Apostles were commanded in it to preach the Gospel to all nations. A record of it is found in the last part of Matthew, Mark and Luke, also in the 20th chapter of John's account of the Gospel. That commission was given to the Apostles only, and applies to them only in the official work which it requires. In their official character they are still in authority in that commission, and they have with them the writings of Mark and Luke, which were authorized by the same Spirit that guided the Apostles. The third commission was given by Christ through Paul to Timothy. See 2 Timothy 4:1, 2. That commission was given to an uninspired preacher, and thus it applies to all who need to study the word of God as Timothy needed to do. Here is the commission in which all preachers of the Gospel now find authority for preaching the Gospel. Finally, the last commission is this which is recorded in the 17th verse of the chapter before us, and applies to all unto whom the word of God is offered. By obedience to this commission, on the part of all Christians, the Gospel might even yet be extended to all nations, But Christians, generally, think that to invite others to read the Bible with them, and to come to the ordinary meetings of the church, will not do any good. So they wait till a protracted meeting is announced to begin at their house of worship, and then, sometimes, they will invite persons to come and hear. In many instances professed Christians remain so ignorant of the Bible that their regular meetings for worship are not conducted so as to interest strangers. Yes, and worse than that, they sometimes live in such an ungodly manner that the people who are outside of the Church lose confidence in them, and in the doctrine that they profess. As a result, much of the preaching that is done is necessary in order to overcome the effect of the ungodliness of many church members. As a further result, the progress of the Gospel is not very rapid, and will not be till professed Christians generally show more godliness in their daily conduct and conversation.

What may we learn by considering the warnings that are set forth in the 18th and 19th verses of this chapter? Those warnings, or threatenings, should fill all who read them with fear and trembling at the thought of Adding to the words of the prophecy of this book, or taking from them. But has the Lord more regard for this book than for any other in his volume? No. In Deuteronomy 4:2 we find that God commanded Israel according to the flesh

not to add to his law nor to take from it. In Proverbs 30:6 we find more on the same subject. Moreover, John's vision on Patmos is the finishing of God's written revelation to mankind. For that reason it is to the other parts of the Bible like the roof is to the other parts of the house that it serves as a covering and finishing. Whoever adds to the roof of a house certainly adds to the entire house on which it is placed, and whoever adds to the vision of John on Patmos adds to the entire Bible.

But do not many persons add to the Bible, in fact, without adding to it in form? Yes. Very few have ventured to add to the text of the Bible, yet multitudes have added to it in offering its teaching to the people, while, perhaps, an equal number have ventured to take from it, in offering it to them. As a rule, those who add to it in one particular will take from it in another. Or, they will strain one scripture and contract, or ignore, another. By this plan the doctrines which offer justification by faith only, by grace only, by Spirit only, and by works only, have been adopted, and used as the foundation for hope of salvation by millions of mankind. But those doctrines, and all others of a similar kind, are in violation of the warnings, or threatenings, that are set forth in the scriptures now under consideration.

What of the 20th verse? In it the Apostle John indicates that Christ will come "quickly," and that John so desired. This explains Paul's words in the last of 2 Timothy 4:8, also Peter's words in 2 Peter 3:12. Those who "love his, appearing" desire him to come soon, or "quickly," and so do those who are "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God."

What of John's benediction, as recorded in the last verse of this chapter, and as the end of the written revelation of God to man? It is an index to the good will of God to man, as made known in the New Testament. The Old Testament was ended with a threatening of a curse, but here we have a prayer for a blessing. This is in harmony with Luke 2:14, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." In Isaiah 9:6 Christ was designated as "the Prince of Peace," and in harmony with that name we find his gospel to be, from the first beatitude to the last benediction. The gospel of Christ, from beginning to end, is a doctrine of peace and of good will toward mankind.

What may we say of this last benediction, when compared,

or contrasted, with the first declaration of the Bible?" In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"; "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." These two sentences set forth the beginning and the ending of God's written word. The former sentence declares the origin of the material universe, while the latter sentence declares the conclusion of the written form of the gospel of God's grace. Between these extremes is a volume as varied and wonderful as is the universe of which it declares the origin. It reveals God to man, and reveals man unto himself. In the Old Testament God reveals that he always meant what he said, and said what he meant. By so doing he intended to prepare mankind to believe that he means what he says, and says what he means in the New Testament. The Old Testament is intended to teach mankind reverence, the New Testament is intended to teach them love. We need both Testaments in order that we may learn to tremble at the word of the Lord, and yet love the Lord because he first loved us.

We have ended our questions, answers, and remarks concerning the New Testament. We began with the 1st verse of the 1st chapter and have continued till we have considered the last verse of the last chapter. We have found the Bible to be the book of earth and the book of heaven; the book of man and the book of God; the book of time and the book of eternity. By studying its history we have been prepared to understand its laws, and by studying its history and laws we have been prepared to understand its prophecies.

We have found one proposition in the Old Testament which God specially endeavored to prove to his ancient people. That proposition is this: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." (Deuteronomy 6:4.) In proportion as ancient Israel, the Jews, became convinced of that proposition they acknowledged the authority of God, and were willing to obey him. He did not need to prove anything to their minds except his divinity. That settled all other questions till they became hypocrites and quibblers.

The same is true with reference to the New Testament. We have found one proposition which Christ endeavored to prove and that is this: "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." (John 20:31.) In proportion as mankind believe this proposition they are willing to submit to Christ's authority. He does not need to prove to us that we should repent, confess, be baptized, pray, nor do anything else that he has commanded. If we believe with the whole heart

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, then we are ready to do, and to be, and to suffer, all that he requires, of us. But this is not true of religious triflers who profess to believe in Christ.

We have found, likewise, that the one statement which indicates God's purpose in creating this world, also in creating man in his own image as the earthly ruler of this world, and giving to him dominion over all that pertains to earthly affairs, and his purpose in all that he has done for man in other respects, is summed up in this declaration: "We love him because he first loved us." (I John 4:19.) That is to say, we have found that all God has done for man in creation, providence, and redemption, was in order to win man's heart, and cause him to be filled with a grateful love toward God as his creator and benefactor.

We have found, also, that in the end of the Gospel Age Christ will come again to gather his saints unto himself to be with him forever. See 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17. Besides this we have found, or learned, that at the end of the Millennial Age Christ will come with his saints to inflict judgment on the ungodly. See Jude, 14th and 15th verses. In addition to this we have learned that the heaven and the earth will then pass away entirely, the wicked who will then have died will be raised and judged, the unseen world, called hades, will then be turned into Gehenna, or the lake of fire, which is the second death. See Revelation 20:11-14. Finally, we have learned that after sentence of judgment will have been pronounced on the wicked, then the new heaven, and new earth, and new Jerusalem, will be introduced as the final home of the redeemed.

In harmony with all that has just been stated concerning both the Old Testament and the New, we have found all the details of divine revelation from the beginning of Genesis to the end of John's vision. Whoever doubts this is kindly requested to adopt I Peter 4:11, and observe it faithfully without addition, or subtraction, or modification, in regard to every scripture, and all will be well. The Savior would not have prayed for the oneness of his disciples, nor would the Apostles have exhorted the disciples to endeavor to keep the unity of "the Spirit in the bond of peace," if oneness had been impossible. But the oneness, or unity, for which the Savior prayed, and to which the Apostles have exhorted, is only possible by all those to whom the Bible is offered learning to measure their speech by the exact words of the Bible. If we would avoid

division we must learn what this means: “If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God, in all things, may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”